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Smith condemns Rasic's comments

Ron Smith: New Technical Support and Direction Manager

By Mark Stavroulakis

With more than 30 years experience in regards to the round ball game, Australia's new technical support and direction manager Ron Smith was rather dumbfounded at the comments he heard drummed down by former Socceroos coach Rale Rasic on his recent appointment.

"I have never been in any talks nor have I shared discussions with Rale for quite some time now and for him to say that about it all was unbelievable. He's never once come to me and asked about anything, so comments like this were rather off field.

From what I am aware of, Rasic has been out of the game for the past 20 years in regards to development but in my opinion stating that he wanted to walk from the game was rather dramatic.

As far as I'm concerned, it would not have bothered me one bit if he or any other person got the nod for this job. I would never walk away from the game I love best.

I thought he walked away from the job 10 years ago anyway", Smith stated to *ABSW*. Smith was annoyed but did not take any notice at the comments made by Rasic that sent out a message to all stating that the former Marconi chief has walked away from the game for good.

"The appointment of Ron Smith is the last straw for me. As of today I am walking away from the Australian game", were the words fired out by Rasic to 'The Australian' last week.

"There's been a lot of rubbish that has happened in Australian soccer over the years and I've put up with it because of my love for the sport, but enough is enough".

Known for taking Australia to the only World Cup way back in 1974, Rasic's comments took a stinging effect on Socceroos coach Frank Farina who backed his new man in charge.

"I've wanted to have someone like Ron on board for three years and finally it looks as though it is going to happen," Farina said to 'The Australian'.

"I've known Ron for 22 years and he can give us what we have been missing in terms of good technical and video analysis of not

(Continued on Page 4)

KING SOLOMONS

By Peter Damalas

The Solomon Islands have produced the most amazing upset in the history of Oceania World Cup qualifiers when they held Australia to a 2-2 draw in Adelaide on Sunday night.

The point was enough to eliminate New Zealand from the World Cup race and means that at last, the play-off reads an different line-up.

Former Sydney United striker Commins Menapi used his experience of the National Soccer League to good effect, scoring twice against a below par Australian defence consisting solely of Under-23 players who will represent the country in the Olympic Games in August in two months time.

The Solomons were rewarded for their enterprising attacking play in the first half a minute before the break when Menapi struck a left-foot shot into the top corner following an error from Adrian Madaschi.

It was an unhappy day for the central defence, Patrick Kisnorbo receiving his marching orders for a second bookable offence in the second half.

This was the turning point. Coach Frank Farina had made all three substitutions at half-time, as the team scored two quickfire goals thanks to Tim Cahill and Brett Emerton.

Menapi's goal with fourteen minutes remaining effectively knocked the All Whites- the traditional nemesis of the Socceroos- out of the running, and booked his team a place in the next phase.

The result is a tremendous boost for the Oceania region, still reeling from FIFA's backflip over direct qualification for the World Cup. And while some may have expected Fiji or Vanuatu to push New Zealand all the way for second spot, it was the Solomon Islands that progressed thanks to a fearless approach in their five matches.

Australia versus the Solomon Islands will certainly be an interesting tussle. The question remains: Will the likes of Harry Kewell and Mark Viduka return for the OFC Nations Cup Final later this year and the World Cup qualifiers next year given the opposition?

The answer might well be 'yes', considering this result and taking into account that the Socceroos will have to play in unfamiliar conditions in Honiara.

As for New Zealand, they are in deep crisis mode as they commence a period of soul searching, as well as a search for a new coach.

Full OFC wrap turn to page 9

PRE-APL TOURNAMENT TO KICK-OFF IN JANUARY

While SBS & Foxtel lands the TV rights?

By Mark Stavroulakis

After months of deciding what the deal was with when the new reformed Australian league was to take place, came the news from close *ABSW* sources that a pre-APL tournament was to officially kick-off in early January comprising of the eight teams set to debut for the new season.

The competition will intertwine with the notion of selecting a team to represent Oceania in the World Club Championships next year.

A that will span from 2-3 months has been pencilled in crowning Oceania's champion.

Already, Lowy has been busily canvassing conversations with the respective bidders as the teams that will been seen in January will be the ones we will all see come the new APL league.

The scheduled time for the new league has also been supposedly pushed forward to April/May instead of its August kick-off, a relief that many coaches and players will share however with only a number of months left till the initial start one must ask of the lack of time these clubs have had in starting up their squads from scratch.

A few weeks ago it was said that ASA CEO John O'Neill did share some interesting views with ASA chief Frank Lowy about the new league and its profeciency.

It is believed that O'Neill was rather surprised with what has been seen by the respective bidders as he was on the belief that more was expected from them.

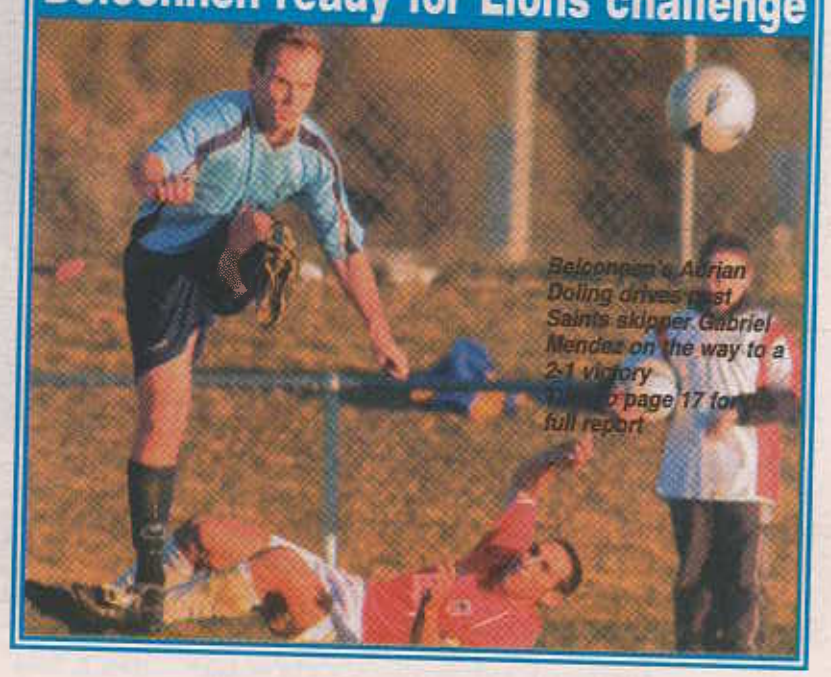
Efforts have been pushed at full throttle speed in pushing the new venture through with Lowy hoping to get the game off to the right start.

One aspect that has been spoken about for quite some time now has been the issue of TV rights for the new league.

It is believed that both SBS and pay TV giants Foxtel have reached to some kind of an agreement in telecasting the matches but this has yet to become official.

Working over time in saving the game are both Frank Lowy (left) & John O'Neill.

Belconnen ready for Lions challenge



Belconnen's Adrian Doling drives past Saints skipper Gabriel Mendez on the way to a 2-1 victory

Turn to page 17 for the full report

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aussies*abroad*

BY Mark Stavroulakis & Daniel Kuziow

Everton are close to a deal for Rangers skipper Craig Moore.

The *Sunday Mail* says Everton winger Gary Naysmith is set to move to Ibrox in exchange for the Australia international.

Moore had a bust-up with Gers boss Alex McLeish before he left for knee surgery in Sydney and is entering the final year of his contract.

Only last week McLeish warned Moore that he would have to prove his fitness and form before Rangers would be prepared to sit down and discuss a new deal.

★★★★

Perth Glory winger Adrian Caceres has signed with ambitious English Third Division outfit Yeovil Town.

After impressing in trials, Caceres inked a 12-month contract with Yeovil - despite also receiving serious interest from Oxford United.

The 22 year-old had been visiting his girlfriend in England when he was invited to train at Oxford. Caceres did so well that Oxford boss Graham Rix expressed an interest in keeping him on.

However, Yeovil also stepped in and manager Gary Johnson asked the Aussie to train with his squad for a couple of days. While Oxford were keen to sign Caceres, it was

Yeovil which were first off the mark with a contract offer - and Caceres was happy to sign.

"I'm delighted to be coming back to England," the former Southampton striker told tribalfootball.com. "It's gone really well for me since I arrived. I was bowled over by how Yeovil treated me.

"The facilities are excellent and the manager has the same ideas about football as I do. I'm very excited about next season."

Johnson is the former manager of Latvia and has been credited with launching that country's football revolution. He will work with the Latvians during Euro2004 as a consultant.

"I was very lucky, with both Graham Rix and Gary Johnson wanting to sign me," added Caceres. "They've both done brilliant things in the game. I was delighted that Yeovil were prepared to sign me, I know I'll learn a hell of a lot from Gary Johnson."

★★★★

Portsmouth are chasing Hertha Berlin defender Josip Simunic.

The Australian-born Croatia international is wanted by Pompey boss Harry Redknapp on a 12-month loan next season. If he chooses to move to Fratton Park, Simunic will join former AIS pal Hayden Foxe at Portsmouth. Ironically, the pair were long-time rivals in Australia's youth teams before Simunic chose to accept an invitation to turn out for Croatia

★★★★

Tottenham are actively seeking talks with the representatives of Empoli midfielder Vince Grella.

The Australia international is coming off contract and has declared he is ready to move on following Empoli's relegation last season.

New Spurs technical chief Frank Arnesen rates Grella highly, having kept an eye on the midfielder's progress since the U20 World Championships in Nigeria.

Grella has told his agent he doesn't want to talk about his club future while on international duty in Adelaide for Australia's Oceania Nations Cup campaign.

Fiorentina have also hinted their interest in Vince who has shown the Australian public that he has what it takes to win a permanent spot in the Roo squad.

Grella will almost certainly replace former skipper Paul Okon in the midfield department for the up and coming 2006 World Cup qualifiers.

★★★★

Leicester City boss Mickey Adams will turn to out-of-contract Manchester City midfielder Danny Tiatto if he fails to sign Fulham left-back Jon Harley.

Adams is hoping to land Harley on a 12-month loan deal, but will try for Tiatto if he cannot find an agreement with Fulham.

Tiatto, who is recovering from a fractured jaw suffered on international duty with Australia, also remains a target for West Brom manager Gary Megson and Leeds United.

★★★★

KV Oostende midfielder Paul Okon is considering his future.

The Belgian media are reporting that Okon is seriously considering retirement and will discuss the situation with his family while on his offseason break in Sydney.

Okon helped Oostende return to the Belgian top-flight after joining in midseason from Leeds United. He has been linked with Newcastle United in Australia, where coach Ian Crook was released last month.

Okon has confirmed he is seriously considering retirement.

Okon is off contract after helping KV Oostende to promotion back to the Belgian top-flight this season.

"I'm exhausted and seriously considering of calling it a day," the 32 year-old admitted. "I think it has been enough for me after a career of 14 years. "I'm leaving for Australia next week. I will decide over my future together with my family. But if I will continue my career, it will be at Oostende."

★★★★

Australia captain Tony Vidmar has hinted he could be ready to sit down and discuss a new contract with Cardiff City.

Vidmar walked away with all the club's major awards after last season's Division One campaign and told the Herald-Sun: "It's a club that's climbed from third to first division which wants to get into the Premiership in the next couple of years.

"I've got another 12 months of my contract to go with the club, but if things go as well as the past season, I don't see any reason not to stay for another year beyond that. It's a club that wants to go places."

★★★★

Veteran Leeds defender Lucas Radebe has criticised team-mate Mark Viduka over his attitude following the Yorkshire club's relegation to the First Division.

Radebe, one of the most experienced players at Elland Road, used ITV documentary 'Leeds, Leeds, Leeds' to complain: "It got to a point where Mark realised the team needed him more and he needed to set an example, especially to the younger players at the club.

"The situation was difficult for us. We were right down at the bottom and we needed everybody together. You don't want players pulling in different directions.

"With 'Vidukes' we knew what quality we had. We knew, as well, the other side of him, when he was dragging his feet to the training ground, but we just accepted him."

★★★★

Blackburn's Brett Emerton is determined to learn from his disappointing first season in the premiership.

The Australia international signed from Feyenoord for £2.2m last summer.

The 24-year-old told the Lancashire Evening Telegraph: "I think players who join big clubs are always under pressure. I started the season well but things did not turn out as I would have hoped.

"The Premier League is a higher standard of football than in Holland and there are no easy games. But I have definitely improved as a player at Blackburn and I want to continue improving next season."

★★★★

Its been a dream come true season for Australian defender Tony Popovic.

The big stopper was involved in one of the English First Division's most famous come-backs in gaining promotion with club Crystal Palace towards the Premier League next season.

Massive Crystal Palace defender Tony Popovic cannot wait for his new challenge next year with his squad after being promoted into the English Premier League.

Their play-off victory over West Ham all but summed big 'Popa's views of a job well done this year.

"It's unbelievable. But we have believed for a long time we can get there and were desperate to do it."

Popovic now has his mind set in play consistent football for Iain Dowie's squad in the Premier League and can't wait for the new challenge.

At 32, the former Sydney Croatia star has been in the peak of his career and knows that he must be at his best to survive in one of the toughest leagues in the world.

★★★★

Excelsior striker and U23 International Brett Holman could have ultimately put his side back into the Dutch Eredivise after his side's two-one win over FC Volendam last weekend.

Volendam, who currently have Lindsay Wilson on their books, were dealt with a sucker punch by Holman in the second half as the on-loan Feyenoord striker gifted his side a precious victory.

It is believed that Feyenoord are weighing up their options in whether or not to sign Brett back into the squad but believe that his loan spell at Excelsior has done the former Socceroo international well.

It is known that Holman is rated as one of the most promising strikers in Dutch football and under Socceroo coach Frank Farina who understands and has recognized the enormous potential the former NSWIS graduate posses.

★★★★

Dutch giants PSV Eindhoven have signed former U17's Joeys keeper Nathan Coe on a three-year deal worth an estimated $500,000.

Coe, a former AIS and QAS graduate was snapped up by Italian Serie A giants Inter Milan in their Primavera squad after the '99 World Cup in Trinidad & Tobago for the U17 championships.

It was a tough task for young Nathan to break into the mould of an Inter Primavera side that had a number of international youngsters in the squad.

Nevertheless Coe plodded along and played a number of games before being eyed by PSV who saw him at one of the many international youth competitions played in Europe.

Coe was placed on trial at the Dutch club but liked what they saw and offered him a lucrative contract that could have him as far as second string keeper for the club.

One of Nathan's close friends and current U23 international Carl Valeri is also weighing up his options with Inter after sparking interests from clubs in Germany and Holland.

Like Coe, its been a rather tough task in breaking into the squad's first team but Valeri has played enough games for rival punters to realize the enormous potential the Canberra born lad has.

★★★★

Former Leeds United goalkeeper Danny Milosevic has turned down a two-year contract offer from Second Division Stockport County.

Stockport boss Sammy McIlroy was prepared to make the Aussie his No1 for next season, but couldn't agree terms with Milosevic. Instead, the free agent will accept a formal invitation of a week's trial at Millwall at the end of the month.

If Milosevic impresses, he will be invited to join the FA Cup finalists for their preseason tour of Canada.

★★★★

Current Socceroo star Alex Brosque could be Australia's next huge signing overseas.

Close sources have heard that the former Stallions striker is all but confirmed with Swiss outfit FC Basel for an undisclosed fee.

Known as one of our most exciting youngsters, Brosque will link up with another Aussie in Switzerland -Scotty Chipperfield.

Former Inter Milan Primavera keeper Nathan Coe has signed a three-year deal at PSV Eindhoven worth an estimated $500,000!

O'Neill must get this house in order first

By Mark Stavroulakis

Has the ASA's chief executive already gone mad? Only months after the appointment of John O'Neill as the ASA's chief CEO came the laughable news that he wanted to follow the footsteps of Thai PM Thaksin Shinawatra in wanting to buy into a leading English football club.

The Thai PM has bought 30% of Liverpool's shares and has also gained two seats on its board for an estimated $US115 million.

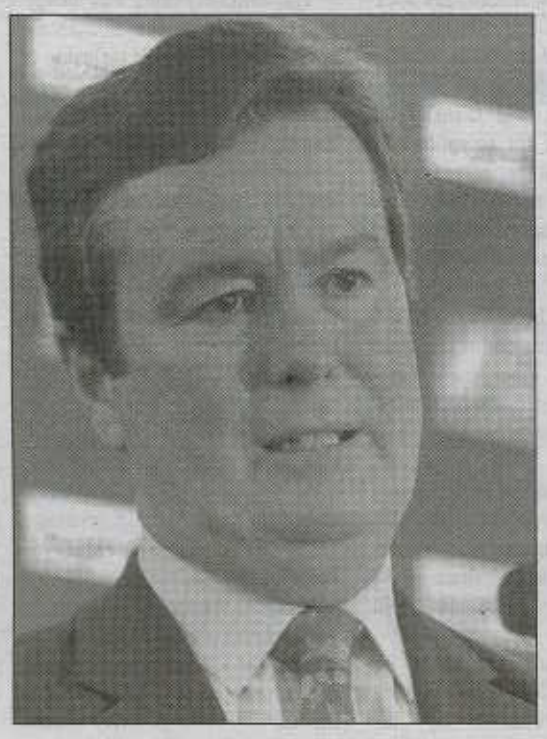
One aspect O'Neill forgot to realize is that Shinawatra is a billionaire tycoon turned politician, so you could understand the power and money this man already possess.

Three months into his new regime in leading Australian soccer out of the doldrums, and already a motive of buying into an overseas club has been issued.

I think one thing O'Neill and the ASA board forgot to realise is that Australia currently has no top flight domestic football and even though efforts have been made in restoring a new league with a new name for an August kick-off next year, no promotion has been seen on this.

We have seen sponsorships targeted and the Socceroos calendar for playing more matches has been upgraded to a point but the main selling point of our own fruitful league has not been spoken about.

It's strongly seen that that the followers of the Australian game want O'Neill and the new ASA board to get their house in their own country in order first before exploring other boundaries outside of this nation.



ASA CEO John O'Neill has set his targets far too high with wanting to buy an English club for means of expansion.

We cannot doubt the former ARU boss' long-term vision in branching the game for the better but in all seriousness the round ball game in Australian is in strife.

What people fail to not understand is that if the Frank Lowy led board do not properly kick-off the game for the better next year under the 8-team APL, then I'm afraid the game will be all but dead.

Australia will be survived by the various state competitions run by federations such as the wealthy SOCCER NSW and VSF to name a few.

Priorities must lie within helping the new league out for next year and that is that.

Once this is realized then visions of wanting to explore different boundaries such as investing in Europe could be looked at.

O'Neill's vision in buying into an English club would be to enable Australia to gain greater control over promising young national representative players in the club-versus-country row.

"We are working hard to ensure that good players who stay here can earn a good living, but we understand we will always lose the very, very top players to Europe and that can't be helped," O'Neill was quoted as saying on Saturday. "But when they do go overseas, it would be terrific if could go to a club in which Australia has a stake."

Australia often struggle to lure their top players such as England-based strikers Harry Kewell and Mark Viduka across the other side of the globe for Oceania World Cup qualifiers and friendly matches.

I wonder how the English though would accept this offer if it were to happen.

I doubt that respective club would appreciate any non-English ruling board on their beloved side especially an Australian.

Many people know the fierce rivalry that stands between the English and Australians, buying a team would only stir the pot even further between the two nations who are known for being ferocious sporting rivals.

If Rupert Murdoch failed to get the attention of Manchester United and its fans a few years back in wanting to buy the Red Devils, what makes it easier for O'Neill to do just that?

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Ron Smith gets the go-ahead

Ron Smith has been assured the role of helping out Socceroo coach Frank Farina (Right)

By Mark Stavroulakis

ABSW predicted it first and finally it came true. Former AIS technical director Ron Smith is all but assured a spot as Australia's new technical chief starting off very soon.

For quite some time now, ABSW was lobbying for Smith to gain the spot he knows best after years of experience in both Australia and Asia.

Smith was one of the main instigators in bringing together the famous AIS soccer program that has nurtured so many of Australia's talent currently playing abroad.

The current Socceroos side consists of as many as ten former AIS graduates that went on under Smith's tutelage.

One reason why Ron was also given the green light was the fact that he knew first hand knowledge on how the promoting side of bringing up youngsters should be done.

Smith has been busily gathering statistics for budding coaches on the A-Z guide of helping them in their duties via hi-tech computer programming which has been a hobby of his for quite some time now.

One of the former AIS head coach's achievements last year was being called up by English club Liverpool to work with some of the biggest stars in the game.

Having coached successfully at club and international level in Malaysia since leaving the AIS nine seasons ago, his knowledge was sussed out by one of the biggest clubs in Europe.

The use of video to analyse both team and individual performances caught the eye of the then Liverpool coach Gerard Houllier.

Ron travelled to Paris to meet with the Frenchman during the Confederations Cup tournament last June and that was where Smith got the go-ahead by Houllier.

His expertise will certainly be needed with the Australian game set to take a hopeful u-turn into becoming a giant sport in the Australian game.

This story follows this week's front page story

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FRANCE	3.75	DENMARK	26
ITALY	5.75	SWEDEN	31
PORTUGAL	7.00	CROATIA	51
NETHERLANDS	7.00	RUSSIA	81
ENGLAND	7.50	BULGARIA	101
SPAIN	7.50	GREECE	101
GERMANY	13	SWITZERLAND	126
CZECH REPUBLIC	15	LATVIA	251

EURO 2004 GROUP A WINNER

PORTUGAL	2.10	GREECE	9.00
SPAIN	2.20	RUSSIA	9.00

EURO 2004 GROUP B WINNER

FRANCE	1.60	CROATIA	10
ENGLAND	2.85	SWITZERLAND	13

EURO 2004 GROUP C WINNER

ITALY	1.45	DENMARK	6.00
SWEDEN	5.00	BULGARIA	9.00

EURO 2004 GROUP D WINNER

NETHERLANDS	2.05	GERMANY	3.35
CZECH REPUBLIC	2.90	LATVIA	41

EURO 2004 QUINELLA

FRANCE-ITALY	8.50	ENGLAND-CZECH REPUBLIC	45
FRANCE-ENGLAND	11	ENGLAND-DENMARK	76
FRANCE-NETHERLANDS	11	ENGLAND-SWEDEN	90
ITALY-ENGLAND	17	ENGLAND-CROATIA	151
NETHERLANDS-ENGLAND	21	ENGLAND-RUSSIA	226
PORTUGAL-ENGLAND	21	ENGLAND-GREECE	251
ENGLAND-SPAIN	23	ENGLAND-BULGARIA	301
ENGLAND-GERMANY	38	Other combinations available	

EURO 2004 TOP GOAL SCORER (GOLDEN BOOT)

HENRY Thierry (FRA)	6.50	GONZALEZ Raul (SPA)	13
VAN NISTLEROOY Ruud (NET)	8.00	OWEN Michael (ENG)	13
VIERI Christian (ITA)	9.00	ROONEY Wayne (ENG)	31
PAULETA (POR)	10	BECKHAM David (ENG)	51
TREZEGUET David (FRA)	10	Other players available	

PHASE 1 - GROUP A MATCH BETTING - 12 JUNE

PORTUGAL v GREECE					
PORTUGAL	1.57	DRAW	3.25	GREECE	5.50
SPAIN v RUSSIA					
SPAIN	1.73	DRAW	3.20	RUSSIA	4.25

PHASE 1 - GROUP B MATCH BETTING - 13 JUNE

SWITZERLAND v CROATIA					
SWITZERLAND	2.50	DRAW	3.20	CROATIA	2.50
FRANCE v ENGLAND					
FRANCE	1.90	DRAW	3.20	ENGLAND	3.50

FRANCE v ENGLAND - HALF TIME/FULL TIME DOUBLE (AT 90 MINS)			
FRANCE-FRANCE	3.00	ENGLAND-DRAW	14
DRAW-FRANCE	4.00	FRANCE-DRAW	16
DRAW-DRAW	4.25	ENGLAND-FRANCE	23
ENGLAND-ENGLAND	5.00	FRANCE-ENGLAND	26
DRAW-ENGLAND	7.00		

FRANCE v ENGLAND - EXACT SCORE (AT 90 MINS)			
FRANCE 1-0	5.00	DRAW 2-2	16
DRAW 1-1	5.50	FRANCE 3-0	16
FRANCE 2-0	6.00	FRANCE 3-1	16
DRAW 0-0	6.00	FRANCE 3-2	23
ENGLAND 1-0	6.50	ENGLAND 3-0	35
FRANCE 2-1	7.00	ENGLAND 3-1	35
ENGLAND 2-1	12	ENGLAND 3-2	35
ENGLAND 2-0	14	Other options available	

PHASE 1 - GROUP C MATCH BETTING - 14 JUNE

DENMARK v ITALY					
ITALY	1.80	DRAW	2.90	DENMARK	4.50
SWEDEN v BULGARIA					
SWEDEN	2.00	DRAW	3.20	BULGARIA	3.30

PHASE 1 - GROUP D MATCH BETTING - 15 JUNE

GERMANY v NETHERLANDS					
NETHERLANDS	2.10	DRAW	3.20	GERMANY	3.00
CZECH REPUBLIC v LATVIA					
CZECH REPUBLIC	1.45	DRAW	3.50	LATVIA	6.50

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Didulica makes Croatia's Euro 2004 squad

Raring to go and all guns blazing for Croatia's new keeper and former Australia Joey Didulica.

Joey Didulica has been named in Croatia's official 23-man squad for Portugal's European Championships, starting this Saturday.

As expected, the Geelong-born keeper has been named alongside experienced pair Stipe Pletikosa and Tomislav Butina in the most prestigious international competition behind the World Cup. Joining him in the squad is another former Aussie, classy Hertha Berlin defender Josip Simunic, who has carved his niche in Croatia's rock-solid back-four.

Didulica said it was an exciting moment, even though his selection was imminent, and thanked the Croatian public for accepting him into the national frame.

"It's been an exciting three months that's capped off five years of hard work in Europe," Didulica said last week.

"I would've been surprised if I had have been left out of the squad but at the same time things change so quickly in international football and you just have to enjoy moments like this.

"I can't be happier with the way the Croatian players, coaches, officials and media have received me. I'm not sure what to expect once I get to Portugal, but I'm sure it will be the highlight of my career."

Didulica made his debut for Croatia against Macedonia in April after being courted by the Europeans since his move to Ajax Amsterdam in 1999.

This officially ruled him ineligible to represent the Socceroos, paving the way for his inclusion in the European Cup squad. Croatia faces Switzerland, France and England in Group B, with the final match against England on June 21 likely to decide the group's second quarter finalist behind France. The squad faces a final friendly against Denmark this weekend before opening its Euro 2004 account against Switzerland on 13 June.

Socceroo coach Frank Farina wished Didulica well in his choosing of Croatia and stated that there were no hard feelings in the switch.

At the moment, the Socceroos currently have Mark Schwarzer, Zeljko Kalac and Brad Jones as keepers.

Many Australian pundits believed that Didulica did have a place in the squad but now this will not be realised with his switch to Croatia who could possibly benefit from Australia's decision.

Katholos relishes Olympic dream

Last Friday morning former Socceroo Peter Katholos was amongst one of the hundreds of people that got the nod in running the Olympic Torch through the streets of Sydney as part of its Australian treck.

Before finally ending it at Sydney's plush Aussie Stadium, 'the Kat', represented Belmore and was honoured in gaining such an incredible feat that he explained as being a once in a life-time opportunity.

"Things like this will always remain with me forever. It was great to see my family support me while I was doing this. The Olympics is the biggest event in the history of sport and being involved in some way made it rather special".

Along with Katholos, former Olympic Sharks chairman Nick Politis also carried the torch after representing Rushcutters Bay.

A proud Olympic moment indeed for former Socceroo Peter Katholos (far left)

EURO 2004 FIXTURES

Euro 2004 All Matches Phase 1

12 June 2004 - Group A			
Portugal	17:00	Greece	Dragão - Porto
Spain	19:45	Russia	Algarve - Faro-Loulé
13 June 2004 - Group B			
Switzerland	17:00	Croatia	Dr. Magalhães Pessoa - Leiria
France	19:45	England	Luz - Lisbon
14 June 2004 - Group C			
Denmark	17:00	Italy	D. Afonso Henriques - Guimarães
Sweden	19:45	Bulgaria	José Alvalade - Lisbon
15 June 2004 - Group D			
Germany	19:45	Netherlands	Dragão - Porto
Czech Republic	17:00	Latvia	Aveiro Municipal - Aveiro
16 June 2004 - Group A			
Greece	17:00	Spain	Bessa - Porto
Russia	19:45	Portugal	Luz - Lisbon
17 June 2004 - Group B			
England	17:00	Switzerland	Cidade de Coimbra - Coimbra
Croatia	19:45	France	Dr. Magalhães Pessoa - Leiria
18 June 2004 - Group C			
Bulgaria	17:00	Denmark	Braga Municipal - Braga
Italy	19:45	Sweden	Dragão - Porto
19 June 2004 - Group D			
Latvia	17:00	Germany	Bessa - Porto
Netherlands	19:45	Czech Republic	Aveiro Municipal - Aveiro
20 June 2004 - Group A			
Spain	19:45	Portugal	José Alvalade - Lisbon
Russia	19:45	Greece	Algarve - Faro-Loulé
21 June 2004 - Group B			
Croatia	19:45	England	Luz - Lisbon
Switzerland	19:45	France	Cidade de Coimbra - Coimbra
22 June 2004 - Group C			
Italy	19:45	Bulgaria	D. Afonso Henriques - Guimarães
Denmark	19:45	Sweden	Bessa - Porto
23 June 2004 - Group D			
Netherlands	19:45	Latvia	Braga Municipal - Braga
Germany	19:45	Czech Republic	José Alvalade - Lisbon
Quarter-final Matches			
24 June 2004 - Match 25			
Winner A	19:45	Runner-up B	Luz - Lisbon
25 June 2004 - Match 26			
Winner B	19:45	Runner-up A	José Alvalade - Lisbon
26 June 2004 - Match 27			
Winner C	19:45	Runner-up D	Algarve - Faro-Loulé
27 June 2004 - Match 28			
Winner D	19:45	Runner-up C	Dragão - Porto
Semi-final Matches			
30 June 2004 - Match 29			
Winner Match 25	19:45	Winner Match 27	José Alvalade - Lisbon
01 July 2004 - Match 30			
Winner Match 26	19:45	Winner Match 28	Dragão - Porto
Final Match			
04 July 2004 - Match 31			
Winner Match 29	19:45	Winner Match 30	Luz – Lisbon

Smith condemns Rasic's comments continued

only our teams and players but also the opposition. There is nobody else I would rather have in this key role", ended Farina.

Away from the controversy, Ron has primmed himself up for an exciting few months with his new role and has stated that he will give enough input and knowledge he has learned from the game in his 30 or so years of experience, to help further develop our exciting players and national teams squads in this country.

"One thing I'd like to set straight is that my role is not directly as a technical director. I will have an input and will asses all national teams and their matches which will be reported back to the respective national team coaches which can be used as key information in developing them into better players. I've worked at all levels of football both abroad and local and have had an involvement in key institutes. I will be looking at further enhancing the quality of our programs which will further the development of our players here".

The fact that there is no National Youth League competition could possibly take its tool on the new Smith program however, the Englishman believes that something will be done about creating a league for the juniors.

"I will certainly address that a competition should take place with our youngsters playing against older opposition. It's a must in further enhancing the players ability to play against more mature players. The reason why we see so many talented youngsters make their marks for huge clubs from across the globe is the fact that they are given a chance at a young age. If your good enough, your old enough. I'll voice my opinion on this but I will obviously need some support in echoing this message across. I think that we need to fast track our good players and having the luxury of a youth competition can do just that".

The former AIS technical coach who has been renowned recently for his new strategic computer programs used as key analysing tools for better both coaches and players in the sport believes that his experience in that department will help him even further in his tough job ahead.

"I intend to use all the skills that I have been taught by means of using the analysing program in aiding both Frank (Farina) and Graham (Arnold) on their players and also the opposition they face. The two matches against Turkey and the recent OFC Nations Cup have been an invaluable experience for me in collated results that will be put forward to the coaches in their plight to better the squad and the individual. By no means will I take a step back on this hobby in analysing players through the use of this system even with my new role. As I said earlier, I love the sport and would do anything to help get it off the ground here in this country".

Many officials and players have applauded the appointment of Smith stating that it has been the first real sign that the ASA is doing its job right.

Now with someone put in place in terms of looking after the development of all our national teams and the foundation of creating quality players, a stepping stone has been created for once on this field.

By no means will this task be an easy one for Ron however judging from his previous records with the AIS, various national squads and in Asia, rest assured our game has been given to someone with safe hands.

**written by Mark Stavroulakis*

EURO 2004 TV LISTINGS

UEFA EURO 2004™ MATCH SCHEDULE

Jun 11	EURO 2004 Preview	7.30 pm	FOX SPORTS 1
Jun 13	Portugal v Greece	2.00 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 13	Spain v Russia	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 14	Switzerland v Croatia	2.00 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 14	France v England	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 15	Denmark v Italy	2.00 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 15	Sweden v Bulgaria	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 16	Czech Republic v Latvia	2.00 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 16	Germany v Holland	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 17	Greece v Spain	2.00 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 17	Russia v Portugal	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 18	England v Switzerland	2.00 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 18	Croatia v France	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 19	Bulgaria v Denmark	2.00 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 19	Italy v Sweden	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 20	Latvia v Germany	2.00 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 20	Holland v Czech Republic	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 21	Spain v Portugal	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 1
Jun 21	Russia v Greece	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 22	Switzerland v France	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 22	Croatia v England	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 1
Jun 23	Italy v Bulgaria	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 23	Denmark v Sweden	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 1
Jun 24	Holland v Latvia	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jun 24	Germany v Czech Republic	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 1
Jun 25	Quarter-Final No 1	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 1
Jun 26	Quarter-Final No 2	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 1
Jun 27	Quarter-Final No 3	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 1
Jun 28	Quarter-Final No 4	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 1
Jul 1	Semi-Final No 1	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jul 2	Semi-Final No 2	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2
Jul 5	Final	4.45 am	FOX SPORTS 2

Bernd Stange's Iraqi vision

By Mark Stavroulakis

"I am proud to be in Iraq" – Those were the words former Perth Glory coach Bernd Stange stated after being asked the question whether he was to continue coaching the Iraqi national team.

The 55-year-old German born and bred mentor has possibly the hardest job ever in terms of coaching in the world but has kept level heading in a country known for its hostility and war.

After the deadly showdown between the U.S. and Iraqi forces ended last year with the country gaining liberation from their mentor Saddam Hussein, Iraq's footballing side has but sprawled for the better.

Scene of joy were evident a couple of months back when Stange's team defeated all odds in Tehran to beat hosts Iran one-nil in one of the biggest Middle Eastern tournaments.

"People told me that the scenes in Baghdad were reminiscent of when the deaths of Saddam's sons were announced, with people firing celebratory shots into the air from Kalashnikovs. Apparently after our 1-0 win over Iran, the whole of Baghdad fired shots into the air causing widespread alarm".

The victory against Iran gained credible media promotion from Iraq's leading newspaper's stating that Stange has been Iraqi football's saviour.

So much so, Bernd took his side to Germany thanks to the German football association who paid for everything in bringing the squad over.

During their time in Stange's motherland, various friendly matches were organized but the players themselves were treated first class facilities and things of which they were not used to back at home.

The German coach's main aim is to lead Iraq to a hopeful spot in the 2006 World Cup in his homeland which would be rather monumental.

"I would dearly love to lead the team to the next World Cup. My players certainly have the potential to achieve that goal. The draw for the second qualifying round placed us in a group with Uzbekistan, Palestine and Chinese Taipei".

Certainly the calibre of players the Iraqi football team cannot be laughed at as Bernd expressed.

"I have a core of experienced players who help the younger players in the team. Iraq has many good players and they are all hungry for success. My captain and two other players are professionals in Qatar. Two more play in Iran, while others in Lebanon. Iraqi footballers are certainly in demand."

Bernd Stange is desperate to lead Iraq to the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

Not only does Stange face the tough task of living in a country that has always been hostile to foreigners but the obstacle of obtaining first class facilities and being paid as been an issue amongst many others.

"The Americans took control of our national stadium during the war and used it as a car park for their tanks. The stadium itself was completely destroyed when they handed it back to us and even the areas around the stadium are in ruins.

There are problems with the water supply in Baghdad and the temperatures can sometimes top 40 degrees. In terms of payment I have not received anything since February 2003 and I don't expect that to change in the foreseeable future. I am sure that I will eventually receive the money due to me as I am no longer being paid, I assume that my contract with the Iraqi FA which runs until 2006 is no longer valid. But I am determined to carry on nonetheless. I want to make a difference. I want to help rebuild Iraqi football. Money takes a secondary role to my work here".

The lifestyle in Iraq for a foreigner is one of a scarce one and according to Bernd, many precautions are taken in protecting the German ace.

"The Iraqi FA told me to move to another hotel because too many Americans had moved in making it a possible target for attacks. I am now in another hotel but I will probably have to move again soon. Security is a major concern in Iraq, robberies and shootings are all too common. People have even fired shots at my chauffeur.

There is no rule of law here. My day to day existence is pretty mundane. I try not to walk the streets or provoke anybody. Iraqis are not fond of seeing people in shorts so I try to wear trousers, but my friends in Iraq do their best to protect me and make sure that I walk down the right roads and avoid others".

Quotes taken from FIFA Monthly magazine

BILL TURNER CUP & BILL TURNER TROPHY

Round 1: Byron Bay 2 Southern Cross 1, St Johns Woodlawn 7 Kadina 0, Albion Park 2 Oak Flats 0, Wollongong 7 Illawarra Grammar 0.

Round 2: DLS Ashfield 4 Homebush Boys 2, Winmalee 1 Colo 0, St Dominics Penrith 8 Penrith 0, Emmaus College 5 Penrith Anglican 0, Eliz Macarthur 2 John Therry 0, Moree 4 Narrabri 2, Xavier Ballina 3 Cape Byron Steiner 2, Kingscliff 3 Murwillumbah 0, St Josephs Banora Point 4 Wollumbin 1, Alstonville 2 Richmond River 1, St Marys Casino 5 Summerland Christian 0, South Grafton 0-9 Woolgoolga 0-8, Taree 2 GLC Forster 1, Maitland Grossman 1 Scone Grammar 0, Maitland 5 St Josephs Lochinvar 3, Singleton 2 St Catherines Singleton 1, St Peters Maitland 2 Cessnock 1, Kotara 6 Swansea 0, Avondale College 3 Lake Macquarie 0, Lambton 5 Hunter Christian 0, CC Waratah 3 Tomaree 2, Merewether 2 St Phillips Christian 1, CC Wallsend 4 Francis Greenway 2, St Edwards Gosford 6 St Peters Tuggerah 0, Narara Valley 3 Erina 0, Henry Kendall 2 Brisbane Waters 0, TLC Tumbi Umbi 4 TLC Berkeley Vale 1, James Sheehan 3 Blayney 1, Orange 1 Kelso 0, Bathurst 4 Lithgow 2, St Johns Dubbo 2 Delroy Campus 1, Parkes 6 Forbes 1, South Dubbo Campus 65 Mudgee 0, Barham 2 Balranald Central 1, Galen College 2 Wodonga Catholic 0, St Josephs Albion Park 3 Woonona 1, Holy Spirit Bellambi 5 Ulladulla 0, Moss Vale 4 Bowral 3.

GIRLS TROPHY

Round 1: Bomaderry 1 Shoalhaven 0, Ulladulla 2 Nowra 0, Kanahooka 3 Illawarra Grammar 2, Holy Spirit Bellambi 3 Wollongong 1.

Round 2: St George Girls 2 Kingsgrove 0, Alstonville 4 Casino 2, Belmont 2 Morisset 1, Lake Munmorah 3 St Marys Gateshead 0, Ulladulla 6 Bomaderry 0, Albion Park 2 Oak Flats 0, Corrimal 3 Bulli 1, Keira 4 Kanahooka 1, Woonona 3 Illawarra Sports 1, Holy Spirit Bellambi 3 Warrawong 2, Crookwell 1-8 Braidwood Central 1-7.

Strachan buoyed by Australian trip

By Mark Stavroulakis

Its all thanks to the recent trip 'down-under', that Scotsman Gordon Strachan will be better than ever in the coaching ranks with whoever he takes over this season.

The fiery redhead assassin spent five weeks in Australia and visited a different states in getting an insight on how the good old Australian system works – Strachan was rather intrigued with a number of things and found that a different environment really recharged his batteries after a hectic time as manager of Southampton.

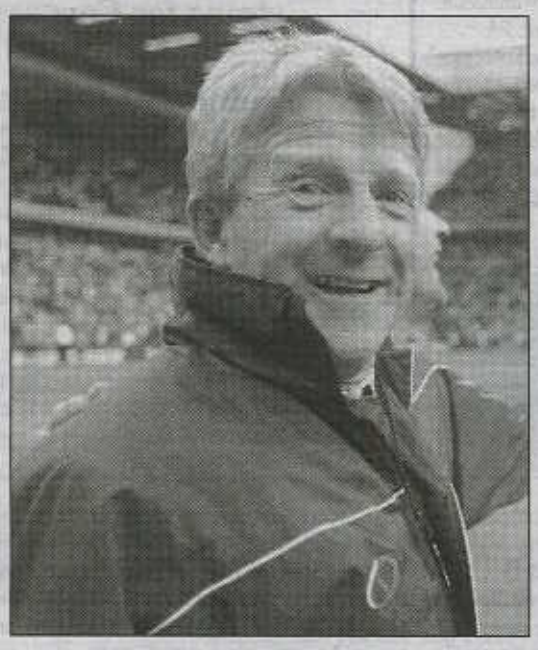
"I think Australia are truly great at team sports and I wanted to know why. So I spent four days with an Aussie Rules side in Melbourne called the Kangaroos, which was absolutely fantastic, and with a rugby league club", Strachan stated to the '*Scotland Sunday Mail*'.

Having spent a good 32 seasons at the elite level of football in the U.K. with Aberdeen, Manchester United and Leeds before turning to coaching at Coventry and the Saints, Strachan had some interesting words to say about the talent in Oz.

"I went to see the soccer institutes in Victoria and NSW. They have a great bunch of kids there aged 15 and 16. If I'd still been a manager I'd have nicked a couple. But I was taking it all in preparing for when I go back".

Asked about what he thought made Australian sport so extraordinary the Scotsman replied: "Where do you start?. First they have the facilities. The family mentality is great as well. I went to a wee place called Coffs Harbour in NSW.

It only has a 25,000 population but I sat there watching all these families gather on a Saturday morning for a triathlon weekend. Kids as young 10 were doing the swimming and running. Then the over 12s were doing that plus the cycling all the way up to the full adult races. And on the professional side they were amazing. The one big thing that struck me was the hours of work are not a problem to them.



Gordon Strachan had a monumental time during his trip 'down-under'

The AFL and the rugby guys are full-time and they're big stars over there. But the time they put into their game, their preparation, recovery and their dedication is wonderful".

Strachan was amazed at the Sydney Roosters and their professionalism on and off the pitch.

"The Roosters were in on a Sunday morning at half-past seven the day after the game to go swimming. And the next day they were back on the weights. I saw their timetable and there were a lot of hours on it. And the rewards are nothing like here. But there wasn't a grumble. Nothing. Not a single 'I was meant to be taking the missus somewhere or I was meant to be at the hairdressers or playing golf.' None of that. I love the Aussie rules stuff. You need three eyes to watch it, I'm not kidding. I sat behind the coaches and chaos reigned for the first five minutes while they all sat with computers working out who was playing where".

At 47, Gordon is currently being eyed as possibly Liverpool's next manager.

Whatever the case though, let it be known that the time off in Australia did the world of good for the Scotsman who could make many more trips our way in cooling his engines.

The Godfather set to return?

Tony Labbozzetta could make a return to the Australian football scene with the Stallions.

By Mark Stavroulakis

Former Soccer Australia chairman Tony Labbozzetta could reappear once more if the Marconi venture into the so-called APL gains under way next year.

'The Godfather' of the Marconi Stallions for quite some time now, Labbozzetta made a strong statement about its formal application to the ASA.

Marconi do sport a number of essential aspects that could make their bid rather interesting.

Everyone is quite familiar that the Stallions have their own home ground in Fairfield, which is of high quality.

Training facilities are also evident while the soccer club has their own club right next to the pitch.

For quite some time now, the Stallions have been embarrassed with riches beyond their visions but as in so many cases in the Australian soccer league, mismanagement has destabilised the clubs pathway towards the top.

Cases have been heard that the new league has hit a snag in recent weeks involving all applications.

Here's a thought, why doesn't the ASA itself ask the men who had a bit of input on the game for some advice on what to do.

The advice might not be taken however a brief view on what they think should happen is always a good cause of juggling up the right recipe for success.

SOCCER NSW has also placed a bid for the only spot directed to the NSW state so it should be rather interesting to see who gains that elusive place.

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WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

Loyalty a Jewel in Local Soccer

Rodney Patterson (34) is playing for Premier League soccer club Bulli now over the last 16 years and shows no signs of slowing down.

Going through the ISA computer Rodney started with Bulli in 1988 with an exemplary disciplinary record of only 13 cautions over all those years (yellow cards now), not a single send-off (red card), a real unique playing career.

He has played well over 500 games for his beloved club and scored an unknown number of goals, since he is well known as a prolific striker, hit the target twice in last Tuesday night's cup semi final at Crehan Park thus securing Bulli a place in Monday night's (14/6.) Bampton cup final against Cringila Lions.

Bulli coach Alan Mangles recalls watching Rod Patterson as a junior soccer player when he started off with Fernhill and never lost touch, praising Rod's work ethic and club loyalty over the many years.

Bulli forward line without Rod Paterson is unheard of, the coach dreading the day he might have to do without this unique talent, a deadly marksman,

Time Running Out to Recruit

This month – to be exact 30/6. – clubs in both ISA soccer competitions have the final chance to sign newcomers.

Movements of players between soccer clubs comes to an end by the end of June. We will see some last minute frantic efforts trying to enlarge playing strength.

After this month no more transfers are allowed, players concerned are not eligible to sign for another ISA club, they may have to play out the season or sit on the sideline.

Who is the Latest Addition

Vuko Tomasevic (24) has joined Picton Rangers last week, a proven striker scoring four times for his new club on his debut in round 12 (29/5.)

The 24 year old NSL player had a successful year with Northern Spirit as a midfielder and played previously with Marconi Stallions (joined 24/1/99), making a total of 32 NSL appearances.

His latest career move saw Vuko playing for NSW State League club Bonnyrigg until the season ended last month.

Local fans will be hoping the new man can lift their team even more than 3rd place at present on the competition table.

Harry James has joined Wollongong Olympic, just finishing a stint withj NSW State League club Rockdale City Suns. A proven performer in all leagues in Sydney he could partner Stuart Young and young talent Ricky Bertakis as a potent strike force according to Olympic coach Gary Hatton.

Midweek Cup Results

Last week at Crehan Park in the Youth Cup Albion Park WE defeated Fernhill 1:0 with the golden goal in extra time, facing now Kemblawarra in the Cup Final on Monday 14/6.

In first grade Bulli soundly beat Dapto 3:1 with goals from Rod Paterson (2), Jason Spencer and for Dapto Shane Wilkshire.

Bulli will now meet Cringila Lions in the Cup Final, they played each other in round 11 (22/5.) with Cringila Lions winning by a sole goal.

The Bert Bampton Cup was introduced in 1973 in honour of long serving ISA administrator Bert Bampton who got involved in soccer in 1933. Bert sadly passed away in September 2002.

Solomons coach: "I owe Elton John everything"

Solomons Islands' globetrotting coach Alan Gillet says he owes all his success to former Watford chairman Elton John.

Gillet worked as a coach at Vicarage Road during John's reign, but revealed: "Elton was great at Watford, fantastic - he sacked me after seven days there!" After last night's 2-2 draw with Australia, Gillet was already fielding offers from other countries, "I have just had an email from an African country that wants to speak to me. It's all because of last night's result and them reading it on the FIFA website."

Gillet describes his time with the Solomons as "the best in my coaching career", which has also included working at Wimbledon, Malawi and the Japanese FA.

The draw against the Socceroos has gone down as the best achievement ever in the clubs history.

Frank Farina was upset about the result however did state that the Roos did do enough to qualify for the next phase.

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE 2003-04

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
1.BulleenZebrasSC	**16**	**9**	**5**	**2**	**22**	**12**	**32**
2.GreenGullyCavaliersSC	16	9	3	4	26	19	30
3.PrestonLionsSC	16	9	2	5	21	12	29
4.OakleighCannonsSC	16	9	2	5	23	15	29
5.AltonaMagic	16	9	2	5	26	25	29
6.FrankstonPinesSC	16	9	1	6	20	14	28
7.StAlbansSaintsSC	15	8	2	5	22	14	26
8.EssendonRoyalsSC	16	7	4	5	23	18	25
9.FawknerBluesSC	16	3	2	11	16	25	11
10.BentleighGreensSC	16	3	2	11	9	28	11
11.WhittleseaStallionsSC	15	2	4	9	23	28	10
12.KnoxCitySC	16	3	1	12	13	34	10

Round 16 Results

Oakleigh Cannons .4 (Sulemani 2', Marinos, Daglis) — Green Gully .....1 (A Vargas)

Fawkner Blues ....2 (Recchia, Murphy) — Knox City 0

Frankston Pines ...1 (Leopold) — Altona Magic .....2 (Becvinovski, Delev)

Essendon Royals ..1 (Curcija) — Bulleen Zebras .....1 (Kakos)

Bentleigh Greens ..1 (Papadopoulos) — Preston Lions 0

Round 17 Fixtures

Saturday 19 June

Knox City ..... vs. Oakleigh Cannons

Altona Magic ..... vs. Whittlesea Stallions

Sunday 20 June

St Albans Saints .... vs. Fawkner Blues

Preston Lions ..... vs. Essendon Royals

Green Gully ..... vs. Bentleigh Greens

Monday 21 June

Bulleen Zebras ..... vs. Frankston Pines

Vince Lia was at his best for Fawkner.

Cannon fire too strong for Cavs

The Oakleigh Cannons showered Green Gully with goals flying to a 4-1 win on Friday night in round 16 of the La Ionica Men's VPL.

Two goals to Sulemani and a single goal to Marinos and Daglis put the issue past any doubt. Green Gully left with little consolation, Andy Vargas scored the Cavaliers' only goal and now Oakleigh moves up to 29 points just one point behind their Friday night rivals.

Fawkner ended any illusions Knox City might have had as the Blues recorded a much needed win at CB Smith Reserve. An injury plagued Knox outfit could not do enough against their hosts and goals to Carl Recchia and Craig Murphy put the match beyond their reach.

Young Socceroo Vinny Lia, who sported his traditional Melbourne mullet was one of the stars of the match by setting up numerous chances for his side.

Recchia also was a standout for the Blues.

The win heats things up at the bottom of the table with only one point between Bentleigh, Knox, Fawkner and Whittlesea.

At Monterey Reserve the Frankston Pines fell to an unstoppable Altona Magic side that has revived its 2004 campaign with a series of good wins. Without the instruction of coach Stan Webster the Pines could not hold off the Magic with Cameron Leopold's solo goal outdone by a goal a piece to Sash Becvinovski and Koce Delev. The win elevates the Magic to fifth place one point above Frankston.

The points were shared at the Reggio Calabria Club with 1-1 draw between Essendon and Bulleen. It is Bulleen's second consecutive draw but the Zebras still maintain the lead after Green Gully went down to Oakleigh.

Former South Melbourne striker Michael Curcija again hit Oakleigh with the scorers charts with a well-taken goal.

The former Socceroo has been in top form for the Royals who has managed to notch up a handful of goals for the newly promoted side.

SOCCERWOMAN

BY JANENE MAR

SOUTH KOREA AND CHINA QUALIFY FOR U19s

In a complete turnaround for the Asia region, South Korea and China have qualified for this year's FIFA U19 Women's World Championship, joining host nation Thailand, following the 15-nation AFC U19 Women's Championship which concluded in China on the weekend.

And in an even bigger surprise, South Korea are the new Asian U19 champions, defeating China 3-0 in the final. They had also beaten the hosts in their earlier group encounter. It has been an amazing twelve months for South Korea, taking the world by storm with their rapid rise up the world ranks. This latest victory follows their first ever participation in the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2003.

Canada 2002 representatives Japan and Chinese Taipei were both bundled out at the quarterfinals stage. China took revenge for their 2002 qualifiers semifinals penalty shootout loss to Japan with a single goal victory this time around. Thailand was a surprise packet, showing they will be worthy hosts by easily accounting for Chinese Taipei.

China, a surprise to many to have missed out on 2002 considering their long-held superpower status at senior level, have restored some order. South Korea defeated Thailand in the semifinals.

An early favourite, goal-scoring machine North Korea is the one semifinalist not to be packing their bags for Thailand 2004, after going down to the defensive-minded tactics employed by China in the do-or-die semi. The match was deadlocked at 1-1 at the end of regulation and extra-time, with the Chinese emerging victorious 6-5 on the penalty shootout. By doing so, China also exacted revenge on the nation who had overtaken their senior glory over recent years until the 2004 Olympic qualifiers.

CANADA AND USA THROUGH TO U19s

Canada and USA have qualified for the 2004 FIFA U19 Women's World Championship, following the weekend's conclusion to the finals stage of the CONCACAF Women's U19 Qualifiers.

This comes as no surprise, considering that the US are the reigning U19 world champions, defeating no less than Canada in the inaugural world youth final.

However, it was Canada who usurped the almighty US to claim the mantle of CONCACAF champions, beating USA 2-1 on a golden goal, two minutes before the end of extra-time. It was the first time the US had lost a match in U19 qualifiers or world championship matches.

The signs were already on the cards. Canada had topped Group A of the eight-nation tournament with a perfect win record. However, reigning world champs USA won Group B only on goal difference after being held to a surprise scoreless draw by Costa Rica in the wet, relieved in the end to avoid a semis clash with Canada.

The other encouraging sign to emerge from the event was the showing of Costa Rica, who not only drew against USA, but also went on to break through into the top three for the first time, defeating Mexico 4-3 in a thrilling seesawing third-place playoff.

THREE AUSTRALIAN REFEREES APPOINTED TO OLYMPICS

Australia and Oceania will be represented by three match officials at the Athens 2004 Olympic Games women's football tournament, referee Krystyna Szokolai (QLD) and assistant referees Airlie Keen (SA) and Jacqueline Leleu (QLD) announced this week by FIFA amongst the list of Olympic appointments.

Each of the trio celebrates their first Olympic selection.

It is Szokolai's first senior FIFA world event appointment, with her top previous achievement being the 2002 FIFA U19 Women's World Championship in Canada where she took charge of the coveted USA v Germany semifinal. Keen was also at Canada 2002, before then working together with Leleu at the 2003 FIFA Women's World Cup in the US, where the Australians officiated the prestigious third-place playoff between USA and Canada.

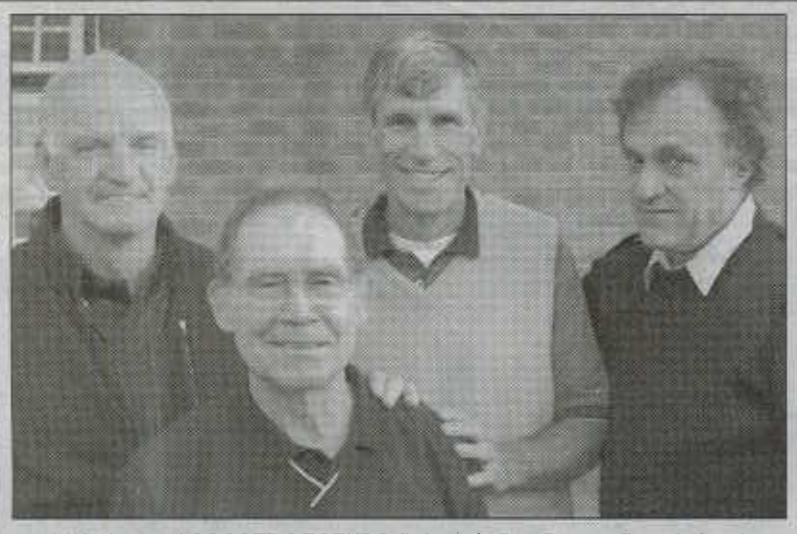
Brazil is the only country to be represented by two officials, whilst Australia is the only nation to supply three officials to the all female panel of ten referees and sixteen assistant referees for the women's football event.

2004 FIFA U19 WOMEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Known teams to date –

***AUSTRALIA**
***BRAZIL**
***CANADA**
***CHINA**
***SOUTH KOREA**
***THAILAND**
***USA**

Johnny Warren Charity Golf Day



AUSTRALIAN SOCCER LEGENDS (left to r): Ray Baartz, Ronnie Lord, Johnny Watkiss with ABSW's John Economos. (Photo by 'Mongo')

'THE JOHNNY WARREN GOLF DAY', recently staged down at the picturesque NSW tiny, tranquil township of Jamberoo, proved to be more than an outstanding success.

No less than 125 former players, (many former Australian International greats), swarmed onto the lush links of Jamberoo Golf Club to help raise funds towards the NSW Cancer Foundation.

Former Australian World Cup captain, Johnny Warren, (a sufferer in recent times of this dreaded disease), was flatly refused permission to be released from hospital by his doctors to attend this glorious Golfing Day staged in his honour.

Former teammates and past World Cup Soccer greats who all turned up at Jamberoo included, Johnny Watkiss, Brian Smith, Ronnie Lord, Ray Baartz, Adrian Alston, Bobby Bignall, Denis Yaager, Jack Curry, Jimmy Fraser. Australia's 1956 Olympic Games captain Bobby Bignall was one of the first to stream into Jamberoo, followed by Billy and Andy Henderson, Barry Salisbury, Adrian Alston, Denis Colusso, Geoff and Neville Morgan plus Herbie Stegbauer (all from St George Budapest).

This moving nostalgic day was meticulously put together by the dedicated labours of Ross, Nola and Jamie Warren, owners of the historic 147 year old Jamberoo Pub.

Following a 'Shot-Gun' start to the Golfing tournament, well blue-printed by 'P.K.' (a local resident and ardent Soccer fan), the large contingent of players later streamed across Allowrie Street to flood into the Jamberoo Pub for a long sumptuous lunch plus drinks.

Johnny Warren

Following lunch a spirited auction was staged that included items of wines plus two air-tickets donated by Qantas Airways Limited to anywhere within Australia

Mr Ross Warren later stated to *ABSW*: "It was a great shame that my young brother John was unable to attend to see all his past team-mates that turned up in such strong numbers in his honour.

"We were able to raise over $7,000 towards research of Cancer," ended Mr Warren.

This glorious, nostalgic Golf Day, staged as a tribute to Johnny Warren, was kindly assisted by a syndication of sponsors which included Qantas Airways Limited, the Jamberoo Pub, Carlton United Breweries as well as the Jamberoo Golf Glub.

By John Economos

Geoff Morgan, Andy Henderson, Ronnie Lord, ?, Mrs Ross Warren, Johnny Watkiss, Bobby Bignall, Ross Warren, Mrs Warren -Johnny's Mother, Jimmy Fraser, Billy Henderson, Romano Bit-Qantas Corporate Executive, Ray Baartz, Herbie Stegbauer, Denis Colusso, Vince Nair-NSW Government Department of Commerce. (Photo by 'Mongo')

(l tor)Ross Warren, Vince Nair-NSW Government Department of Commerce, Herbie Stegbauer, Ronnie Lord, Denis Colusso, Bobby Bignall, Barry Salisbury-obscurred, Ray Baartz, Denis Yaager, Johnny Watkiss, Jimmy Fraser, Romano Bit-Qantas Corporate Excecutive, Billy Henderson.

Ethnicity in Australian Football

By Troy Van Dyk

Imagine you are sitting in the middle of a Marconi and Sydney United local derby. You are sitting across from a group of United supporters yelling "Hrvatska, Hrvatska", clapping, and cheering loudly.

Is this not the type of atmosphere that Australian soccer needs? As crowds are beginning to wane, in the Sydney district due to lack of funding and support to clubs.

The ASA would like to see a new type of club for the new national league. A club in the mould of Perth Glory and Adelaide United, which is an organisation that is not supported by only one culture but can be supported by all those in the area or state the club, is located in. In addition, a club that is financially stable and able to cope with the financial needs of the new national league.

The ASA would like to take away all of the existing Sydney clubs and create one new club, this may be all well and good but what about the clubs missing out who have been mainstays of the Australian league since its conception?

The big question is that will the new clubs gain any real support from fans who's clubs have now been left in the state league of teir respective locations. There are rumours that a new club in Sydney is being established and it will be called either the Sydney Blues or the Sydney Crusaders.

This team would attempt to close the divide in the state and allow Marconi, United and Olympic supporters to all support the same team but where is the tradition? Each of the clubs mentioned have been around for decades and the ASA would be stealing a piece of soccer history from the Sydney people with this new side.

The ethnic based clubs have also been some of the most successful sides in the Australian game. Marconi became the first side to make three consecutive NSL grand finals, winning two, which where consequently Sydney deries against Olympic and United.

Before this A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt won the title and afterwards Sydney Olympic won the NSL title twice. While Sydney United made the final on a few occasions. In Melbourne the Knights are another club that will most likely not make the new national league like its Sydney counterparts.

The Melbourne Knights and Sydney United games were as important as other local rivalries in Australian football as it was an important occasion in the Croatian community's football calendar. This game and the atmosphere and excitement it generated will never be brought back.

Mark Schwarzer, Paul Okon, Frank Farina: All of these players were involved with Marconi Stallions. Leeds front man Mark Viduka played with Melbourne Knights (as did Croatian and ex-potential Australian keeper Joey Didulica). Zeljko Kalac played at Sydney United as did NSL player of the year Ante Milicic and he later moved to Sydney Olympic where Brett Emerton played.

These are just a few examples of the type of quality players the ethnic clubs of Australia have helped produce and display to the Australian people and later to a world audience as they went on to ply their trade elsewhere.

Though the ASA is right about one aspect involving ethnic based clubs and that is the fact that in England there is English clubs and in Holland there is Dutch clubs but in Australia there is Italian, Croatian and Greek soccer clubs that have all been involved in the new defunct National Soccer League.

The Soccer Association of Australia would like to create "Australia" based clubs for all to support, so that the only division between teams will be the state that they are located in.

There are good points and bad points about the ethnic clubs in Australian football but these clubs were foundation members of the league when it began in 1977, it would be wrong to totally obliterate the memory of these teams.

A possible merger between United and Marconi for example could happen which would allow both teams to survive in another entity.

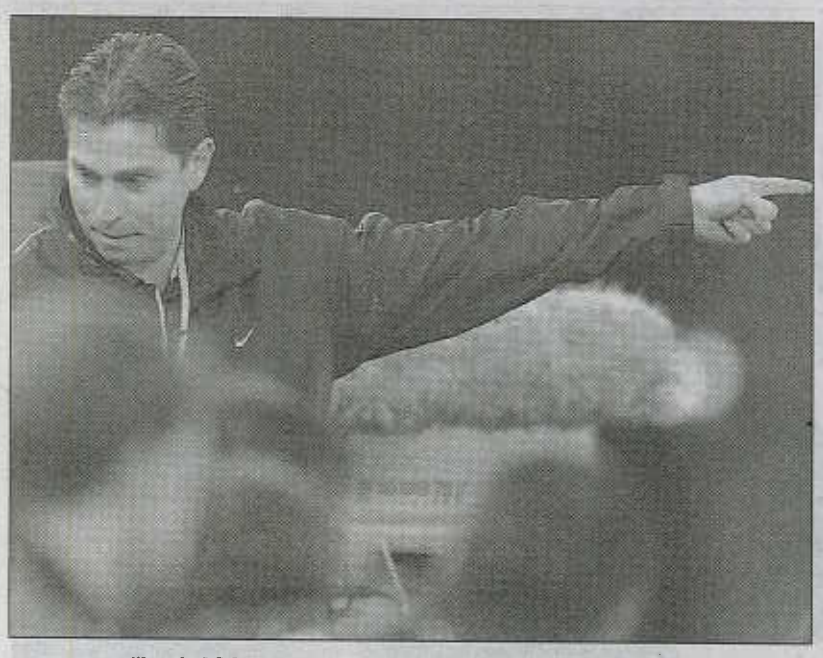
But it is an unlikely move as Marconi has signalled their intention by bidding for a place in the new national league while both Olympic and United are both going to play in state league at the beginning of next season and so it shall be that "Hrvatska, Hrvatska" will not be heard in the new national league.

Sydney United supporters shown in their full glory at their final match as an NSL club last season.

We hear you Frank BUT ...

Green & Gold Army

http://www.ggarmy.com



"Look ASA we need more promotional help to get more supporters to our Socceroo matches all I see at the moment is a wall of red Turkish supporters" – a comic quote by Frank Farina made up by ABSW

By Mark van Aken

Frank Farina expressed his frustration at the poor support that Australia has afforded her national teams this week.

He has a point does our Frank and he and his side have every reason to feel let down. The bulk of the 28 odd thousand fans in Sydney and Melbourne were first or second generation Turks – in Sydney they made their presence felt, in Melbourne they showed their colours if not so much their voice.

The Harbour City saw not one but three different supporter groups chant for the green and gold. Despite their best efforts the sea of red and white was overwhelming. Victoria's capital wasn't too much friendlier for the Socceroos.

The Green and Gold Army found voice, however as one Melbourne journo remarked they resembled more a platoon than an army.

Fast forward to Adelaide and a city that has embraced the world game all season long in the NSL displayed only luke warm interest in it's national team. While a healthy crowd of 12,000 plus was in the stands, outside of the usual suspects, there wasn't a huge ground swell of support for the lads. On Monday, the final ebb came when only a thousand people witnessed the Socceroos 9-0 drubbing of Tahiti.

This prompted this Farina outburst in Melbourne's Age. "I put it to all the supporters, why aren't you coming? Let us know, let us know what we have got to do because it is disappointing, more so in Melbourne where I would say 80 per cent of the crowd was red and white. Let us know what we have got to do and we will try and do it."

Frank, don't take it personally. Farina that is – Lowy on the other hand... Your promotional team has let you down. They've let the Socceroos down and worse still they have let soccer down.

The ARU launched their advertising for this year's International Rugby series months ago. Those who attended last years World Cup received an info kit recently that included two 3-D images. One was of George Gregan and the other a packed Telstra Stadium, the 3-D image making you feel like you were there.

Compare this to the recent Turkey ads that showed the very same stadium empty. The idea was that we need people to fill the seats and have 'every position covered'. Clever, perhaps, but the contrasting strategies are striking.

Why did hardly any Australian fans show over the past fortnight? Here are some reasons – not excuses, but reasons.

❑ Pricing – from the get go these prices were too high. How can a sport claim to be serious about nurturing the grass roots when a children's ticket is $45 and there is no student concession offered, forcing full time students to pay at least $67 for a ticket? A season ticket to 15 NSL games or 11 AFL Matches is around the same price (for students).

❑ Same old story - You'll need all your fingers and toes to count how many times matches like these are billed as having 'full strength squads' only to see them decimated through injury or self interest. Again this was the case for these matches with the undisputed poster boys of the game Mark Viduka and Harry Kewell absent. This is enough to see those with medium level interest boycott the games. Those with only a mild interest in the sport wouldn't touch it with a 10 foot pole.

❑ Furthermore compare it, again, to Rugby. How would ticket sales for the Wallabies series go if George Gregan, Wendell Sailor and Stephen Larkham weren't playing? Then have players of their ilk miss pretty much every other International on a regular basis and see how the figures further decline.

❑ Society in general – As a society Australia is extremely ethnically plural in make up and is in many ways still coming to grips with its large ethnic mix. Should we be surprised at the Turkish people passionately supporting their heroes? Yes, maybe no. But when Frank bemoans the crowd in Sydney and Melbourne being distinctively red and white is he questioning Turkish-Australians for why they weren't supporting the Roos or the rest of Australia why they weren't there to do the same? This is the physche of modern Australia but don't fear Frank, many of those decked in red and white last week will be on your side come next November.

❑ As touched on previously the promotion was not nearly good enough. This scribe did not even see one TV spot for them, although he is reliably informed they did exist. Try hopping on a tram in Melbourne in the next month without being smacked in the face with Qantas Wallabies v Scotland posters.

In Adelaide there is barely a hint that the Socceroos are in town and there has been no concerted effort to alert Croweaters other wise. Where are the appearances in Rundle Mall? Where are the visits to schools and other media opportunities? It's a two way street and at the minute we're stuck in a cul de sac.

❑ The opposition - For readers of this column Turkey are no strangers. They are a quality team chock full of great players. For the uninitiated, i.e 90% of Aussie society they are unknowns. The wider Australian public doesn't know that Turkey is ranked Top 10 in the world. Nor are they even aware that they collected the bronze at the last World Cup.

❑ Timing - Monday at 5.30 is a ridiculous time to play a game. Then we play on a Wednesday at 2pm, to quote one great American tennis player "You can not be serious!"

This is an OFC tournament, which is understood. But do the cash starved OFC understand that Australia is going to win this tournament – simple as that.

So why not let us play our games at the most suitable times that will translate into gates of ten thousand plus for each game and a swag of dollars in their Pacific Island pockets?

So there it is. Frank please let the boys know that there are plenty of good people who love them. Plenty who have cris crossed the country in the last week to see them in action.

But also let them know about some of the above and please ask them to not take it personally.

We can only hope the new body has learned some valuable lessons, lessons that will not go unheeded.

OFC Nations Cup 2004

Tahiti end tournament with victory

A ten man Tahiti have claimed their only victory of the 2004 OFC Nations Cup by coming from behind to upset Vanuatu 2-1 at the Marden Sports Complex.

Tahiti has Gabriel Wajoka to thank for their first victory in five games, after the PTT marksman netted an injury time winner that has lifted the Polynesians off the foot of the OFC Nations Cup ladder.

Richard Iwai's match opener preceded Wajoka's winner on 23 minutes for the Vanuatuans, which was later cancelled out by Axel Temataua's strike just before half time – Tahiti's first of the tournament.

After abysmal showings in their past three games, Tahiti looked a changed side for today's encounter and thoroughly their victory, especially considering they played the last 35 minutes without captain Samuel Garcia, who was sent off following his second yellow card for a dangerous tackle.

The Tahitians would have considered themselves unlucky to go in level at half time, having put in a vastly improved performance than that to their previous losses to Australia and New Zealand.

For all their ambition though, Tahiti surrendered a goal to their opponents' midway through the half when Iwai celebrated his return from injury with his first goal of the tournament.

Iwai's match opener came after a delightful through ball from Mitchelton teammate Etienne Mermer, which was smoothly finished off by the Vanuatuan front man.

Tahiti's equalizer arrived in the latter stages of the first stanza when Temataua was on hand to tap in a neat lay-off from Vincent Simon.

Simon made a fantastic run into the box following a swiftly taken free kick and did marvelously well to put the equalizer on a platter for Temataua.

Following Garcia's dismissal in the 55th minute, few would have anticipated Tahiti to maintain their ascendancy and up until the commencement of injury time, it seemed as though they wouldn't.

Tahiti: 19. Daniel Tapeta (gk), 2. Angelo Tchen, 3. Pierre Kugogne, 7. Samuel Garcia, 8. Billy Mataitai, 9. Gabriel Wajoka, 10. Axel Temataua, 12. Farahia Teuira, 13. Vincent Simon, 15. Larry Marmouyet, 16. Felix Tagawa

Bookings: Garcia 32', Garcia RC 54'

Goals: Temataua 40', Wajoka 89'

Vanuatu: 20. Charly Kalsanei (gk), 3. Manley Tabe (2. Geoffrey Gete 67'), 4. Lexa Bibi, 6. Graham Demas, 7. Fedy Vava, 9. Seimata Chilia (17. Jean Maleb 63'), 10. Etienne Mermer, 12. Lorry Thompsen (8. Joe Ture 77'), 13. Richard Iwai, 14. Pita Maki, 19. Roger Joe

Bookings: Iwai 35', Kalsanei 58', Maleb 86'

Goals: Iwai 23'

Referee: Leone Rakaroi

Silky Solomons embarrass Roos

The beautiful game at its very best. Not one of the 2 978 on hand at Adelaide's Hindmarsh Stadium will ever forget the absolutely amazing spectacle offered by the Qantas Socceroos and the Solomon Islands that ultimately resulted in the Solomons achieving the greatest feat in the history of island soccer.

Commins Menapi was the hero for the visitors, netting two clinical goals that cancelled out Australia's early second half brace from Tim Cahill and Brett Emerton.

Make no mistake; the match belonged to the Solomons.

They leave for Honiara tomorrow knowing that the better part of 510 000 locals will be salivating at the return of the new immortals of their country.

"They're ecstatic and so am I," said a euphoric Solomon Islands coach Alan Gillett after the match when speaking of his delirious team.

"Somebody said 'is this the best thing you've ever done?' – yeah it is!

"I've taken a J-League side to the Emperor's Cup final in Tokyo, I've been involved in the FA Cup in England, I've taken a club from the fourth division to first division, but it's what you do now that counts.

"The players are as good as any I've ever taken and they're amateurs. They've been terrific, because I haven't been very nice to them!"

The Solomons were clearly the more dominant side of the half and thoroughly deserved their half time lead.

Former Sydney United striker Menapi's left foot blast left Qantas Socceroo 'keeper Zeljko Kalac with no chance, after Partick Thistle defender Adrian Madaschi showed callousness when attempting to clear a seemingly harmless long ball from the Solomons defence.

At 1-0, the Solomons were already accelerating plans for a national day of celebration.

Forty-five minutes later, those plans were concrete.

The Qantas Socceroos, having made all three possible changes at the break, started the second half just as the Adelaide crowd had hoped and within seven minutes had stolen the lead.

Cahill was first to strike for the home side, dissonantly netting the leveler after a typically rugged run of his pierced the Solomons defense.

Two minutes later and the Qantas Socceroos had seemingly snatched the Solomons World Cup aspirations in a flash, when Emerton converted one of a number of quality crosses from Ahmad Elrich.

The Blackburn Rovers winger was well positioned to ease home Elrich's pinpoint pass and from here, it seemed as though Australia would stroll home for their fifth consecutive win.

Of course, this was not to be the case.

Menapi showered himself in glory once more when he slammed home a fierce left foot drive from ten metres out that again left Kalac with no option but to watch and admire.

Needless to say, the Solomons bench was in raptures and the hearts of the few New Zealanders on hand sunk like stones.

2-2 it remained and the Solomon Islands became the first country outside of the Tasman to claim an OFC Nations Cup final berth in the modern era.

Qantas Socceroo coach Farina was not altogether displeased with the performance of his team, despite the score line suggesting an embarrassing day at the office.

"Look, the objective has been achieved, we came here to beat New Zealand and win the tournament and we've done that," said a philosophical Farina at the post match press conference.

"I've been saying to the lads all week about complacency, irrespective of who you're playing."

The 2-2 draw, the only ever Qantas Socceroo result other than a win against island opposition outside of a pair of losses to Fiji does not affect Australia's progression to the next stage, but does give Farina some concerns coming into the Qantas Socceroos next international fixtures.

"I expect more from our lads and I let them know that at half time," said Farina.

"We probably came out in the second half with a much better attitude, a lot more discipline and then, Patty Kisnorbo gets sent off, so they were still in the game"

"We got the result, we're through, simple as that."

Australia: 18. Zeljko Kalac (gk), 2. Jade North, 7. Brett Emerton, 8. Josip Skoko, 9. John Aloisi, 10. Tim Cahill, 12. Alex Brosque (21. Ahmad Elrich 45'), 14. Patrick Kisnorbo, 16. David Tarka (4. Simon Colosimo 45'), 19. Max Vieri (15. Mile Sterjovski 45'), 20. Adrian Madaschi

Bookings: Kisnorbo 42', Kisnorbo RC 56'

Goals: Cahill 50', Emerton 52'

Solomon Islands: 1. Felix Ray (gk), 2. Leslie Leo, 3. Mahlon Houkarawa, 6. Nelson Sale, 7. Alick Maemae, 10. Batram Suri, 11. Commins Menapi, 14. Jack Samani (16. Stanley Waita 63'), 18. Henry Fa'arodo, 19. Paul Kakai (13. George Lui 63'), 21. George Suri

Bookings: Menapi 16', Lui 89'

Goals: Menapi 43', 75'

All Whites OFC exit

New Zealand ended their 2006 World Cup campaign with a hard fought 2-0 win over Fiji in the first match at Hindmarsh Stadium.

The All Whites were made to work for what was a less than convincing victory, but an important one at the time for the reigning OFC champs who, it seemed, had done enough to ensure their passage through to the next stage.

Veteran duo Che Bunce and Vaughan Coveny were the scorers for the All Whites, with both goals coming in the opening minutes of either half.

The All Whites superior fitness won over in the end, as a tiresome Fijian side ultimately had no answer the Kiwis less than perfect game that brought a forgettable campaign to a close.

Any resistance the Fijians could muster was effectively killed off in just the eighth minute when Bunce rose above a pack of Fijian defenders to expose their brittleness to set plays for not the first time this tournament.

The teams went to the break at 1-0 and although the Fijians had proved to be a stern test to the Kiwis, they had not created any notable chances of their own.

The second half started much the same as the first, with Vaughan Coveny ensuring a New Zealand victory with a well-taken header from Brent Fisher's cross after 56 minutes.

The Kiwi's third win of the tournament had many predicting a Trans Tasman playoff in October of this year and then September of 2005, but, alas, the Solomon Islands stole the All Whites thunder in the final match of the competition, meaning the Kiwis face up to six years in international purgatory following their deplorable displays in Adelaide.

New Zealand: 1. Mark Paston (gk), 2. Duncan Oughton, 4. Steven Old, 5. Che Bunce, 6. Tony Lochhead, 7. Ivan Vicelich, 8. Aaran Lines, 13. Brent Fisher (19. Neil Jones 81'), 14. Ryan Nelsen, 16. Vaughan Coveny, 17. Raf De Gregorio (11. Leo Bertos 60')

Goals: Bunce 8', Coveny 56'

Fiji: 1. Simione Tamanisau (gk), 2. Lorima Dau, 6. Jone Vesikula, 7. Malakai Kainihewe (11. Luke Vidovi 33'), 9. Thomas Vulivuli (17. Seveci Rokotakala 81'), 12. Esala Masi (22. Waisake Sabutu 51'), 13. Taniela Waqa, 15. Salesh Kumar, 16. Viliame Toma, 18. Laisiasa Gataurua, 21. Pene Erenio

Referee: Claus Bo Larsen (Denmark)

RESULTS

Round 2

New Zealand 3 v Solomon Islands 0
Goals: Fisher 36', Oughton 81', Lines 90'
Australia 9 v Tahiti 0
Goals: Cahill 14', 47', Skoko 43', Simon 45'+OG, Sterjovski 51', 62', 74', Zdrilic 85', Chipperfield 90'
Fiji 1 v Vanuatu 0
Goals: Veresa Toma 74'

Round 3

Australia 6 v Fiji 1
Goals: Madaschi 6', 50', Cahill 39', 66', 75, Elrich 89', Gataurua 19'
Solomon Islands 4 Tahiti 0
Goals: Fa'Arodo 9', Menapi 14, 79, Suri 41'
New Zealand 2 v Vanuatu 4
Goals: Coveny 61, 75, S Chilia 37, Bibi 64, Maleb 72, Qorig 88

Round 4

New Zealand 10 v Tahiti 0
Goals: Coveny 6', 38', 46'+, Fisher 16', 22', 63', Jones 72', Oughton 74', Nelsen 82', 87'
Fiji 1 v Solomon Islands 2
Goals: Veresa Toma 21', Kakai 16', Houkarawa 82'
Vanuatu 0 vs Australia 3
Goals: Aloisi 25', 85', Emerton 81'

Round 5

Tahiti 2 v Vanuatu 1
Goals: Temataua 40', Wajoka 89', Iwai 23'
New Zealand 2 v Fiji 0
Goals: Bunce 8', Coveny 56'
Australia 2 v Solomon Islands 2
Goals: Cahill 50', Emerton 52', Menapi 43', 75'

Top OFC Goalscorers

Tim CAHILL Australia	6
Vaughan COVENY New Zealand	6
Brent FISHER New Zealand	4
Commins MENAPI Solomon Islands	4
Mile STERJOVSKI Australia	3
John ALOISI Australia	2
Ryan NELSEN New Zealand	2
Brett EMERTON Australia	2
Adrian MADASCHI Australia	2
Duncan OUGHTON New Zealand	2
Batrum SURI Solomon Islands	2
Veresa TOMA Fiji	2

Final Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Australia	5	4	1	0	21	3	+18	13
Solomon Islands	5	3	1	1	9	6	+3	10
New Zealand	5	3	0	2	17	5	+12	9
Fiji	5	1	1	3	3	10	-7	4
Tahiti	5	1	1	3	2	24	-22	4
Vanuatu	5	1	0	4	5	9	-4	3

ITALIAN

ITALIAN AFFAIR

By Joe Russo

They have described the news that Fabio Capello will coach Juventus as an earthquake in Italy, although in reality for the Turin giants there could be no better choice.

A few days ago it seemed that Didier Deschamps, the current Monaco boss, former Juventus player and former France captain, seemed a certainty to take over. For weeks it appeared to be a two horse race between Deschamps and Parma coach Cesare Prandelli.

Capello signed a contract on Friday with Juventus reported to be worth about A$6 million per year for three years, sparking outrage in the capital Rome. However, the irony is that Roma quickly moved to sign Prandelli to replace Capello on their bench next season.

According to media reports in Italy Capello's salary at Juventus is lower than what it would have been at Roma next season where he was still under contract.

His decision to sign with Juventus after five years at Roma seems surprising. He had assured everyone only recently that he would remain and was also heavily involved in Roma's recruitment program.

Furthermore, Roma had finished second in the Serie A this year and is certain of a place in the Champions League next season. Juventus, who finished third, will have to go through the early qualifying rounds starting in late July. A poor performance there, like Inter's last year, could see them take no part in any European competition.

Capello is arguably one of the greatest club coaches in the history of Italian football. He was undeniably successful at AC Milan in his six seasons there. He won the Italian Championship in 1992, 93, 95 and 96 and the Champions League in 1994.

In his only season at Real Madrid, in 1996/97, he won the Spanish Championship ending a then five-year domination by Barcelona. In 2001 he brought Roma the Scudetto, only the third in their history, and his team was never far from the top few places in the other years.

Juventus have signed him for his charisma, ability to handle difficult players and, most of all, his impeccable pedigree. It is hard to believe that his decision was a sudden one. The wily Juventus General Manager, Luciano Moggi, was surely behind this off-season transfer coup.

The writing may have been on the wall in recent weeks. Juventus had signed French defender, Jonathan Zebina, much loved by Capello and at Roma since 2000. They had also contested Emerson, the brilliant Brazilian midfielder, and finally Roma gave in to Juventus and allowed the player to go. He too had joined Roma in 2000.

Roma officials announced last Friday that they may have expected Capello to leave the club but that he would join Juventus was most unexpected. There has never been any love lost over the years between these two clubs.

Local talkback radio in Rome has been abuzz with Capello's departure in recent days. Mario Corsi, a local radio sports broadcaster, described Capello as a 'worm.' A newspaper headline screamed 'Vergogna' (Shame on You), while others even said they missed Zdenek Zeman, Roma's controversial coach before Capello.

Outside Roma's training ground in Trigoria in Rome, some supporters have turned their anger on Juventus and put up some inappropriate signs against the Turin giants. Even a local member of parliament, Paolo Cento of the Green Party, said that Roma supporters deserved better treatment and that Capello's decision was 'unacceptable.'

However, it might not be all doom and gloom at Roma. With Capello's departure it certainly brings to end an era but it may be a chance to start a brand new and exciting adventure under Prandelli.

Let us not forget that last year Roma President, Franco Sensi, who is never too short of a word, said that if Capello left he would do a somersault to celebrate.

They are also starting to highlight in Rome some of Capello's faults. Some people are saying that they would have won much more under a different coach. There are others who are pointing out that the team finished second last year to Juventus when they should have had the Scudetto wrapped up. And, finally, his four losses this past season to AC Milan have also been highlighted.

Juventus on the other hand appear to be building up very nicely for next season. Emerson, Zebina and Christian Vieri will be in the black and white stripes. Vieri, despite rumours to the contrary, will be in Juventus colours next season as revealed two months ago by Robert Scarselletta, Italian football correspondent, on radio 98.5 FM in Sydney. Ironically Vieri was said to be joining Capello at Roma up until recent weeks. They will be together but only in Turin.

★ ★ ★ ★

NSW readers can tune into 98.5 FM on Sunday nights at 10.00pm for all the latest soccer news locally and abroad with myself, Joseph Carlucci, Mark Stavroulakis, Robert Scarselletta and Stuart Jones.

THREE PROMOTED TO TOP FLIGHT

Palermo players celebrate in style after winning promotion to Serie A after a 31-year absence.

Palermo, Cagliari and Livorno have all earned promotion to Italy's Serie A next season.

Sicilians Palermo beat Triestina 3-1 to move nine points clear of sixth place and secure top-flight football after a 31-year absence.

Cagliari and Livorno secured victories, which ensured that sixth-placed Fiorentina could not catch them.

Sardinian side Cagliari beat Salernitana 3-1 while Livorno enjoyed a 3-1 victory at Piacenza.

Five teams are promoted to Serie A this season as the top flight will expand to 20 teams with just three automatic relegations.

At a packed 'Favorita' stadium in Palermo, the home side never looked back after their top scorer Luca Toni put them 2-0 before the break and promotion was greeted with fireworks and partying in the street across the Sicilian capital.

Heavy investment in Serie A players such as Toni and Emanuele Filippini, who added the third to make sure of the points, gave former Bologna coach Francesco Guidolin's side the quality needed to return to Serie A for the first time since their relegation in 1973.

The island of Sicily, not short of passion for the game could now have two teams in Serie A next season with fourth placed Messina in with a real chance of promotion.

Tuscan side Livorno are back in the big time after an even longer absence of 55 years.

The club, noted for their passionate 'ultras' were playing Serie C football four years ago.

Cagliari, relegated from Serie A in 2000, won note this season due to the presence of former Chelsea and Italy forward Gianfranco Zola in their squad but Saturday's win was inspired by their outstanding Honduran international striker David Suazo, who scored two superb solo goals.

They could be joined in Serie A by Atalanta, relegated last season, who are in fifth placed while Fiorentina, reborn after their bankruptcy two years ago, are sixth and still in with a chance of promotion.

The sixth-placed side will play off with Perugia, who finished 15th in Serie A, for a place in Italy's top league.

Ancona, Modena and Empoli were the three teams relegated from Serie A.

AC AMATEURISH ON ASIA TOUR

Italian league giants AC Milan suffered another embarrassing loss when Chinese league champions Shanghai Shenhua dumped them 2-0 in an exhibition match.

Although the reigning Serie A champions were missing several of their Italian internationals, coach Carlo Ancelotti's men put in another sub-par performance in the wake of their 1-0 defeat at the hands of Hong Kong football minnows Kitchee.

Jorg Albertz got things going for Shenhua in the 52nd minute when he fired a pass up the middle to a waiting Qu Shengqing, who turned, stepped and fired to find the back of the net from 16 metres out.

Less than two minutes later, shellshocked Milan were again caught flatfooted when hard-running Peter Vera drove the ball up the middle and passed to Sun Ji, who struck a beautiful right footer from the edge of the box over diving goalkeeper Christian Abbiati.

The black and red shirts looked set to dominate the match over a seemingly intimidated and outclassed Shenhua, but Milan squandered several first half chances with flubbed kicks and shots that sailed wide.

In the second half the reinvigorated Chinese side tightened its defence, squelching Milan's efforts to find the goal.

In the closing moments of the match, striker Aimo Diana was unable to head home what would have been a face-saving score, much to the delight of an estimated 5,000 cheering spectators.

While many of Milan's players stayed in Europe for the build-up to this month's European Championships in Portugal, legendary defenders Paolo Maldini and Alessandro Costacurta were booted up for the expected win. Ancelotti, according to local press reports, had promised that the 17-time Serie A kings would come away on top in Shanghai.

Star striker Andrei Shevchenko sat out the match after suffering an apparent muscle injury in Hong Kong.

Giuseppe Favalli is moving north to Inter Milan after 12 seasons with Lazio.

Favalli leaves Lazio

Italy defender Giuseppe Favalli has left Lazio after 12 seasons with the Rome club to join Serie A rivals Inter Milan.

Inter said on their official website Favalli had signed a two-year contract with the club, who finished fourth in Serie A this season.

Favalli is part of Giovanni Trapattoni's squad preparing for Euro 2004 where he is reserve to left-back Gianluca Zambrotta.

The 32-year-old defender joined Lazio in 1992 from Cremonese and was part of Sven Goran Eriksson's title winning side in 2000.

ROMA DECIMATED BY DEPARTURES

Newly-appointed AS Roma coach Cesare Prandelli says his team can challenge for next season's Serie A title despite the sale of several key players.

"A team like Roma has to aim for the Serie A title. If the squad remains the same as it is now, we'll go far," the former Parma coach said at his official presentation.

"I certainly won't demand that the club buys certain players. I'm prepared to fit in around the club -- it's what I've been doing at Parma for the past two years."

Cesare Prandelli has taken over as coach of Roma following Fabio Capello's move to Juventus.

Prandelli was appointed less than 24 hours after his predecessor Fabio Capello had walked out to join Serie A rivals Juventus.

The 46-year-old made his name at Verona and Venezia before guiding Parma to fifth-place finishes in the past two seasons.

Roma's debts mean big-money transfer deals are unlikely and Prandelli faces a battle to keep hold of players.

Since the end of the season Roma, who finished runners-up to AC Milan, have sold first-team defenders Jonathan Zebina and Walter Samuel.

Prandelli, however, said he was confident that the club would keep its captain and prize asset, Italy international striker Francesco Totti.

"I've already spoken to Totti. I heard from his yesterday and he likes what's taking shape here," he said.

MEANWHILE Roma's Brazilian midfielder Emerson says he is set on a transfer to Juventus despite the prospect of a move to Spain's Real Madrid.

"I want to go to Juventus and I think that is the sensible choice," Emerson told Italian newspaper Gazzetta dello Sport.

Reports of an agreement between Roma and Real threw the move into doubt but Emerson says he is not going to change his mind.

"I've heard about (the agreement) but why didn't they inform me first? It seems a strange one to me," said Emerson.

"I hope that Juve and Roma will reach an agreement as soon as possible. I don't think it is fair to make a big issue out of this. I just ask that they let me go," he said.

Roma midfielder Emerson is set to follow Capello and head to Turin.

ENGLISH

BLUES GET MOURINHO

New Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho has been handed the task of giving Roman Abramovich a tangible return on his massive investment in the premier league club.

Mourinho inherits a squad brimming with talent following the first wave of signings bankrolled by Abramovich but despite a flood of transfer speculation the former Porto coach hinted that his priority was to cut the number of players at his disposal.

"I like short squads," the 41-year-old told a news conference. "I want 21 outfield players, plus goalkeepers, no more. This is the correct number for the very specific work we want to do."

Among high profile players likely to leave Stamford Bridge are Argentina's Juan Sebastian Veron and Hernan Crespo, and experienced Frenchmen Marcel Desailly and Emmanuel Petit as Mourinho tries to instil the hunger that underpinned his success at Porto.

British newspapers had reported that Mourinho was likely to bring with him several of the Porto players he guided to Champions League victory last week but the coach was keen to stress that he had no pre-conceived transfer plans.

"The most important thing is to find players who think as I think," he said. "I love all the Porto players because we won together but I must first find out about the players I have at Chelsea."

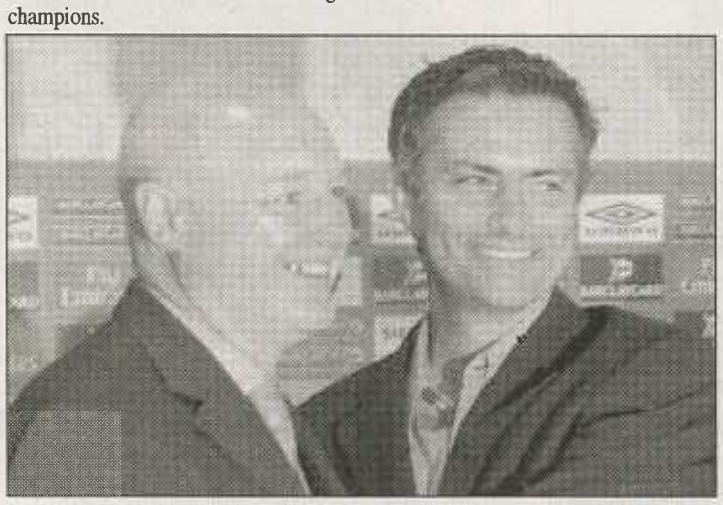
Others whose Stamford Bridge days look numbered are Danish winger Jesper Gronkjaer, midfielders Boudewijn Zenden and Mario Stanic and striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink, with Mourinho looking to build a team around a core of England internationals like John Terry, Scott Parker and Frank Lampard.

MEANWHILE former Chelsea coach Claudio Ranieri is poised to return to Valencia after agreeing to personal terms with the Primera Liga champions.

Sports daily Marca said that the deal would be completed as soon as the Italian coach reached an agreement with Chelsea over his payoff following his sacking earlier this week.

If the deal does go through Ranieri will replace Rafa Benitez who quit the club and has been linked with the vacant job as Liverpool manager.

Ranieri coached Valencia from 1997 to 1999, guiding them to victory in the King's Cup in his final season in charge before signing for Atletico Madrid.



New Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho (right) greets Chelsea's Chief Executive Peter Kenyon.

QUEIROZ RETURNS TO OLD TRAFFORD

Sacked Real Madrid coach Carlos Queiroz has confirmed he is set to return to English Premiership side Manchester United as manager Sir Alex Ferguson's assistant.

And he has his sights set on becoming the future Old Trafford boss. Ferguson's contract runs out in June 2006.

Queiroz, who was sacked after a disappointing first season as Real coach, told newspapers here that he is set to put pen to paper.

"It's practically a done deal. There are just some legal details to sort out," Queiroz told the A Bola and Record newspapers.

"Manchester United's offer is not one to turn down. It's a long term contract which puts me as favourite to become club manager."

Sacked Real Madrid coach Carlos Queiroz is heading back to Old Trafford.

According to reports, 51-year-old Queiroz will sign a three-year deal with an option for an additional year, and would be ready to step into Ferguson's shoes when he retires.

Queiroz left Manchester United for the Bernabeu last summer on a two-year deal to become Real head coach.

But his failure to win a trophy saw him relieved of his duties after just one season.

He was linked with the vacant managerial post at White Hart Lane although Spurs director of football Frank Arnesen said they were still running the rule over different possibilities.

Ferguson was keen to have Queiroz back in his bid to reclaim the Premiership title from Arsenal.

Everton to call Anfield home

Everton's new chief executive Trevor Birch says the premier league club will have to ground share with Liverpool or build a new stadium to return to their glory days.

Everton, one of the founder members of the Football League, were twice league champions and won the European Cup Winners's Cup in the mid-1980s but since the premier league formed in 1992 they have spent most of their time fighting relegation.

Birch believes the club must break 112 years of tradition and leave the 40,000-capacity Goodison Park to raise enough finance to challenge the likes of Manchester United, Arsenal, Chelsea and city rivals Liverpool.

"If Everton do not find a ground, or share a ground, that gives them the access to that additional revenue, it is unlikely that they will be a big club again in the near future. You have got to drive those additional revenues," he told the Liverpool Echo.

The local council are willing to part-fund a joint stadium although Liverpool are currently progressing with plans to build a new home on the city's Stanley Park, planned to open in 2006.

Everton's proposal to move to Kings Dock last year failed to get past the planning stage and Birch, who arrived at the club on Tuesday, is now looking at all options - including linking up with Liverpool.

"I have not seen the plans, I've not seen the reports or the feasibility of it," he said.

In the 1880s Everton played at Anfield but, after a row with the landlord in 1892, moved on to Goodison Park. The disgruntled landlord stayed behind and formed a new club - Liverpool.

Everton may return to Anfield after 112 years at Goodison Park.

French national soccer team coach Jacques Santini will take over as coach of Tottenham.

SPURS FIND FRENCH SAVIOUR

France coach Jacques Santini will be taking over as the new Tottenham manager after Euro 2004, the club said.

David Pleat had filled the gap at Spurs till the end of this season after the sacking of Glenn Hoddle in September but Tottenham have now finally got themselves a more permanent replacement.

Santini will be working with Frank Arnesen who has taken over the role of sporting director as of the end of the month.

Santini told the Tottenham club website: "I am delighted to get the opportunity to join Tottenham Hotspur. I am an ambitious man and it has always been a dream of mine to coach a big English club in the most exciting league in the world.

"Tottenham Hotspur are a very big club, with a wonderful history and great traditions.

"I am determined to help the club return to its place amongst the elite and look forward to joining after Euro 2004."

Spurs, who finished 14th in the Premiership last season, had been linked with Claudio Ranieri, who left Chelsea.

Spurs chairman Daniel Levy said in a statement released to the Stock Exchange: "I am delighted Jacques is joining the club. He was the outstanding candidate because of his experience, coaching ability and track record at all levels."

Santini's arrival is sure to get pulses racing at White Hart Lane, where the club's long-suffering fans have been looking for the man to lead them back among the Premiership's elite for years.

Since his appointment in July 2002, France have lost only one of their 23 matches, beating Cameroon to win the Confederations Cup in 2003 and qualifying for Euro 2004 in impressive style by winning all of their group matches and conceding just two goals.

Dickov set for Rovers

Scotland international striker Paul Dickov is poised to leave relegated Leicester City and sign for Blackburn Rovers.

Blackburn, who finished 15th last season, said on their website that they had reached an agreement with Dickov in principle and that the deal to bring him to Ewood Park should be completed this week.

Dickov, 31, was one of three Leicester players who spent a week in a Spanish jail in March after allegations of sexual assault. All charges were dropped.

The tigerish striker began his career as an apprentice at Arsenal, and had spells on loan at Luton and Brighton before moving to Manchester City in 1996 and then Leicester in February 2002. He was Leicester's Player of the Year when they gained promotion to the premier league in 2003. He has played seven times for Scotland, scoring once.

Leicester said Dickov had rejected a substantially improved contract.

Paul Dickov is set to remain in premiership football with a move to Blackburn.

EURO 2004

PORTUGAL 20

EURO 2004 is only days away and below are just some o

STILIAN PETROV - BULGARIA

Date of Birth: 5th July, 1979.
Club: Celtic (Scotland).
Position: Central midfielder.

Petrov is the heart and soul of the Bulgarian team. While he does not possess the natural skill or eccentric personality of Hristo Stoichkov, who lead the team to the semi-finals of the 1994 World Cup, he represents the battling spirit within the squad through his extensive work rate and long-range shooting.

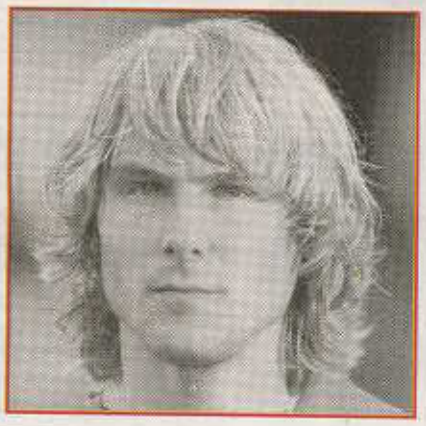
DADO PRSO – CROATIA

Date of Birth: 5th November, 1974.
Club: Monaco (France).
Position: Centre forward.

The 29-year old has made a late burst into the international scene, securing Croatia's path to Portugal with goals in the play-offs against neighbours Slovenia. Prso possesses close skills and is a major threat in the air. His free scoring form for Monaco helped them into the Champions League final and he will be heavily relied upon by a team in transition.

PAVEL NEDVED - CZECH REPUBLIC

Date of Birth: 30th August, 1972.
Club: Juventus (Italy)
Position: Central / left midfielder.



Nedved made a name for himself when he scored against Italy at Euro 96, and has proven to be a success in Serie A ever since. Enjoyed an outstanding season in 2002/03, guiding Juventus to the Scudetto and Champions League final, although he has been well below par this campaign. He will be looking to perform well after missing out on Manchester last May.

JESPER GRONKJAER - DENMARK

Date of Birth: 12th August, 1977.
Club: Birmingham (England)
Position: Right / left midfielder.

Gronkjaer's late season burst was not enough to keep him at Stamford Bridge, and his transfer to Birmingham may inspire him to prove his former employers wrong with a strong tournament. Gronkjaer has speed to burn, and he is useful on the ball, cutting infield to good effect and chipping in with some speculative goals.

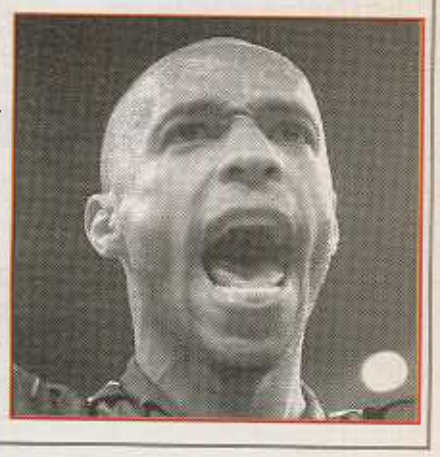
STEVEN GERRARD - ENGLAND

Date of Birth: 30th May, 1980.
Club: Liverpool.
Position: Central midfield.

England's progression in this tournament will be based around a sterling midfield effort, lead by Liverpool general Steven Gerrard. At just 23, the club captain is incredibly mature, and is a fearsome sight when in full flight. He enjoys the tackling and distributing duties in the centre, and his long range passes to Michael Owen up front may be the prime avenue to goal.

THIERRY HENRY - FRANCE

Date of Birth: 17th August, 1977.
Club: Arsenal (England)
Position: Centre / left forward.



The Arsenal 'invincible' is in the form of his life, and is ready to make Euro 2004 his own. Henry has a full range of tricks-silky dribbling skills, short and long range passing accuracy, speed and an excellent finishing touch. He is at his best when dropping deep to receive service and instigating attacking moves involving teammates Pires, Zidane and Trezeguet.

MICHAEL BALLACK - GERMANY

Date of Birth: 26th September, 1976.
Club: Bayern Munich.
Position: Central midfielder.

Ballack's four goal haul against Malta has helped restore battered German faith ahead of what is shaping up as a difficult Group D. The attacking midfielder has a tendency to switch off for periods of a match, but he usually chimes in with a goal or four when he is in the mood. The key to Germany's chances of progressing, not unlike the World Cup two years ago.

VASSILIS TSARTAS - GREECE

Date of Birth: 12th November, 1972.
Club: AEK Athens.
Position: Central midfielder.

Like his Bulgarian counterpart, Tsartas dictates play for the Greek side. Highly influential going forward, the former top scorer in Greece can score from long range and certainly from set pieces. He is experienced in European football, and his calming presence will be important to a team without recognised stars or international experience. Look too see Vassilis lead from the front as his vision is sure to baffle up and coming opponents.

STAR WATCH

04 Written by Peter Damalas

the names that could become stars of the tournament

ARAT IZMAILOV - RUSSIA

of Birth: 21st September, 1982.
: Lokomotiv Moscow.
tion: Central midfielder.

21-year old scored one of the best s of the Champions League season is club side almost eliminated even- finalists Monaco. Izmailov is a wild- for the first eleven, but he is an esting option if the team begin to ggle, as he has all the makings of a ant playmaker.

FERNANDO MORIENTES - SPAIN

Date of Birth: 5th April, 1976.
Club: Monaco (France)
Position: Centre forward.

Absolutely devastating throughout the Champions League season, Morientes enjoys the bright lights of the big occassions, and alongside former clubmate Raul will form a fearsome striking partnership at Euro 2004. Morientes has everything a coach could desire in attack- speed in short bursts, ability to hold the ball up, passing and dribbling skills and a deadly finish.

CO - PORTUGAL

of Birth: 27th August, 1977.
: Porto.
tion: Central midfielder.

Brazilian born playmaker will oust ong-serving Rui Costa for a berth in starting line up, given his starring in Porto's Champions League suc- . His dribbling, passing and foul ving abilities will be crucial in ugal's quest for European glory on e soil, and countryman Luis Felipe ari is set to give him free reign in eam.

HENRIK LARSSON - SWEDEN

Date of Birth: 20th September, 1971.
Club: TBA
Position: Centre forward.

Larsson returns to the international fold after retiring following Sweden's second round exit at the 2002 World Cup. The pint-sized striker will be paired up with giant Zlatan Ibrahimovic, and his goalscoring instincts may be enough to help the Swedes out of trouble and into a quarter-final berth at the very least. He is being courted by a number of Spanish clubs.

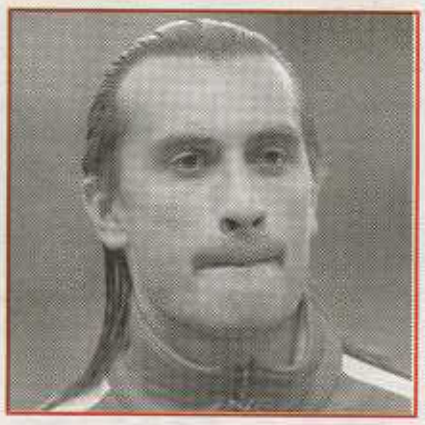
FAEL VAN DER VAART - NETHERLANDS

of Birth: 11th February, 1983.
: Ajax.
tion: Central midfielder.

quality of the Dutch centre forwards ell documented, but van der Vaart e instrumental in providing quality ts for them to profit. The Ajax cap- s perhaps the most complete play- r in the squad who is also capable oring regularly. The 21-year-old will y be snapped up by a European at the tournament's conclusion.

HAKAN YAKIN - SWITZERLAND

Date of Birth: 22nd February, 1977.
Club: VfB Stuttgart (Germany).
Position: Central midfielder



The effervescent Swiss playmaker will hope to translate off-field horrors into on field success. Easier said than done though, as his country are in a tough group and he has played very little football in the Bundesliga this season. Hakan Yakin will bear the hopes and expectations of an entire nation on his shoulders.

RISTIAN VIERI - ITALY

of Birth: 12th July, 1973.
: Inter Milan.
ion: Centre forward.

squad laden with so much creative t, Vieri stands out as the bullish e forward who wants only one - to score, and score again. His ty inside the penalty area is ubted- he is perhaps the best goal her in the world- but he also works for the team on the edges, where ombines so well with twin playmak- el Piero and Totti.

MARIS VERPAKOVSKIS - LATVIA

Date of Birth: 15th October, 1979.
Club: Dynamo Kyiv (Ukraine).
Position: Centre forward.

The bubbly striker may not have many opportunities to prove himself, as his team will most likely adopt a conservative approach in these finals. However, Verpakovskis is able to exert his influence on a match- his three goal contribution against Turkey is testament to this. He will lead the line, but is able to drop deep and play on the right.

WORLD CUP QUALIFYING

Scolari puts neck on the line

Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari said he will leave his post if the squad does not get past the first round of the 16-nation European football finals which begin later this month.

"If we don't reach the quarterfinals, I think I'll have done a bad job because my goal is to reach the semifinals," he told reporters.

"I don't think I can stay on if we don't reach that goal."

Scolari, who led his native Brazil to a record fifth world title in 2002, said the president of the Portuguese Football Federation, Gilberto Madail, "is demanding, as a minimum, to get past the first phase."

Portugal, who are in Group A in the Euro 2004 finals alongside Greece, Russia and Spain, have a 8-5-3 record under Scolari, who took the helm of the national team in January 2003.

Scolari's current contract with the Portuguese Football Federation expires at the end of July.

He said he would like to stay on in Europe but if he does not stay on in Portugal, and no other offer from European clubs come forward, he will return to Brazil "where there are 350 teams that want me."

Rivaldo wants werder

Brazilian World Cup winner Rivaldo has invited German champions Werder Bremen to take a chance on him next season.

The former Barcelona midfielder, 32, has been on a downward slide since leaving AC Milan at the end of last season and wants to prove he can still do the business in the Champions League.

"Bremen is a top club and I want to play in the Champions League and prove that I am not a mercenary," Rivaldo told daily Bild.

Former AC Milan and Brazilian international Rivaldo is looking for a new club.

Rivaldo is thought to want two million euros per annum to don the Bremen shirt.

Premiership side Bolton and Scottish champions Celtic have already attempted to sign the Brazilian star but have so far failed to strike a deal.

MEANWHILE The Qatar Football Association were reported to have signed Rivaldo.

The Qatar FA claimed the Brazilian international would play there next season along with the Dutch midfielder Ronald de Boer. Frank de Boer, Ronaldo's brother, is also considering a move to the Middle East country.

The Qatar FA technical director Manfred Honer, quoted on the BBC's sports website, said: "Rivaldo has signed for us. He has been here for three days looking around and finding a place to live."

Honer added: "I never had any doubt in the negotiations that the move was all about money. It is what motivates the player.

"I can't reveal figures, but if you are telling me Celtic and Bolton were willing to offer him 30,000 pounds a week, I can only smile and say we are paying him much, much more."

Rivaldo was out of contract after leaving Milan and then returning to club football in Brazil.

The protracted saga of his transfer has left Bolton manager Sam Allardyce fuming, while Rivaldo also made disparaging remarks about Martin O'Neill's Celtic.

OSTERS HANDED UEFA CUP PASS

Swedish side Osters IF have been awarded a place in the first qualifying round for next season's UEFA Cup through the fair play league, European soccer's governing body UEFA announced.

The Swedish FA topped the fair play rankings and Osters, who were fourth in their fair play league, claimed their place as the three clubs ahead of them, Elfsborg, Djurgarden and Hammarby, have already qualified for European competitions.

Two additional places in the first qualifying round will be awarded at a draw on June 8 at half time during the Euro 2004 under-21 final in Bochum, Germany.

Clubs entered in UEFA's Fair Play draw:

Esbjerg (Denmark), Brann (Norway), Charlton Athletic (England), Freiburg (Germany), Cork City (Ireland), Lahti (Finland), Mallorca (Spain), Teuta (Albania), Mika (Armenia), Throttur Reykjavik (Iceland) and a representative from the Ukrainian league, which finishes on June 19.

ARGENTINA PAY THE PENALTY

Ronaldo converted three penalty kicks as World Cup champion Brazil beat Argentina 3-1 to take over first place in South American qualifying for the 2006 tournament.

At Belo Horizonte, site of the United States' famous 1-0 upset of England in the 1950 World Cup, Ronaldo scored on penalty kicks in the 16th, 67th and 90th minutes for Brazil. Juan Pablo Sorin got Argentina's goal in the 79th minute.

The Real Madrid striker put the world champions ahead in the first half with a twice-taken penalty after being upended by Gabriel Heinze.

Brazil's Ronaldo celebrates after scoring one of his three goals against Argentina.

Ronaldo stroked home his second in the 68th minute after being tripped by Javier Mascherano and completed his hat-trick deep into injury time after falling over goalkeeper Pablo Cavallero's clumsy dive for the ball.

Juan Pablo Sorin pulled one back in the 80th minute.

Ecuador beat Colombia 2-1 to send their neighbours tumbling to their fourth defeat in six World Cup qualifiers.

Substitute Franklin Salas scored the winner after Agustin Delgado had put Ecuador ahead with his first goal since the 2002 World Cup and Frankie Oviedo had replied for Colombia.

Colombia striker Elkin Murillo was sent off in the 88th minute for aiming a kung-fu kick at Ecuador midfielder Edwin Tenorio.

Bolivia, Chile and Peru put themselves back in the hunt for places at the 2006 World Cup finals with impressive victories.

Paraguay's 20-day preparations for their high-altitude clash were wasted as they went down 2-1 to Bolivia in La Paz, Chile ended Venezuela's romantic run with a 1-0 win and Peru condemned Uruguay to a second successive defeat at home.

Peru triumphed 3-1 at Montevideo's historic and once impregnable Centenario stadium where Venezuela had run out 3-0 winners in March.

The results left Chile and Paraguay with 10 points from six games, Venezuela with nine, Peru eight, Uruguay seven and Bolivia six.

The top four teams qualify directly for the World Cup and the fifth plays off against the Oceania region winners.

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brazil	6	3	3	0	10	6	12
Argentina	6	3	2	1	11	6	11
Chile	6	3	1	2	8	6	10
Paraguay	6	3	1	2	9	8	10
Venezuela	6	3	0	3	6	7	9
Peru	6	2	2	2	9	7	8
Ecuador	6	2	1	3	5	5	7
Uruguay	6	2	1	3	12	14	7
Bolivia	6	2	0	4	7	13	6
Colombia	6	1	1	4	5	10	4

Results

Brazil 3 (Ronaldo 16p, 67p, 90p) **Argentina 1** (Sorin 79), **Ecuador 2** (Delgado 3, Salas 66) **Colombia 1** (Oviedo 56), **Bolivia 2** (Cristaldo 9, Suarez 72) **Paraguay 1** (Cardozo 33), **Venezuela 0 Chile 1** (Pinilla 84), **Uruguay 1** (Forlan 73) **Peru 3** (Solano 12, Pizarro 19, Farfan 62).

Argentina's Hernan Crespo (left) battles against Brazil last week.

BAJEVIC BACK AT OLYMPIAKOS

Coach Dusan Bajevic has agreed to return to Olympiakos following the club's failure to win any silverware last season.

Bajevic won three titles and a Greek cup with Olympiakos from 1996 to 1999, and he will be a popular choice among fans who watched arch-rivals Panathinaikos win the league and cup double last season.

Dusan Bajevic: Returns to Olympiakos after a tough time at AEK Athens.

The Serbian coach replaces Nikos Alefantos who was sacked at the end of the season after Olympiakos finished second in the league and were defeated 3-1 in the Cup final by Panathinaikos.

Alefantos was in charge for just a few weeks after replacing Oleg Protasov in mid-March.

Bajevic was driven out of AEK Athens in January by hardcore fans who accused him of being a "traitor" after he left the club in 1996 to join Olympiakos. He has also coached PAOK Salonika.

INAMOTO PAIN

Japan midfielder Junichi Inamoto will be sidelined for up to three months after breaking a bone in his left leg while playing against England.

The 24-year-old was hurt in a tackle late in the 1-1 draw in Manchester. Inamoto, who plays for English premier league club Fulham, was diagnosed with a fracture just above the ankle.

Japan were already missing captain Hidetoshi Nakata (groin strain) and striker Naohiro Takahara (lung infection) for the three-way tournament, also involving Iceland.

Japan take on India at home this Wednesday (AET) in an Asian 2006 World Cup qualifier. Inamoto will also miss the Asian Cup in China, which begins on July 17.

His injury could jeopardise his chances of securing a full transfer to Fulham from J-League club Gamba Osaka. Inamoto is currently on loan at the London club.

Japan's Junichi Inamoto will be sidelined for three months after breaking a bone in his left leg.

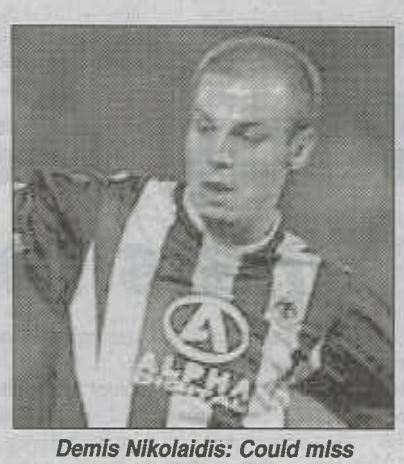
GREECE GAMBLE ON DEMIS

Greece coach Otto Rehhagel has included Atletico Madrid striker Demis Nikolaidis in his 23-man squad for the Euro 2004 despite an injury that could sideline him for two matches, the Greek FA confirmed.

The 31-year-old Nikolaidis, Rehhagel's main striker, is eager to take part in his first major international tournament but injured his leg during training last week.

Team doctors have said he would ideally need several weeks rest, effectively ruling him out of the Group A matches against hosts Portugal on June 12 and Spain on June 16. Greece then play Russia on June 20.

The Greeks are training in Switzerland for their first European championship since 1980.



Demis Nikolaidis: Could miss Greeceís first two matches at Euro 2004.

OH-NO FOR ONOPKO

Russia captain Viktor Onopko has been ruled out of the Euro 2004 finals with a knee injury.

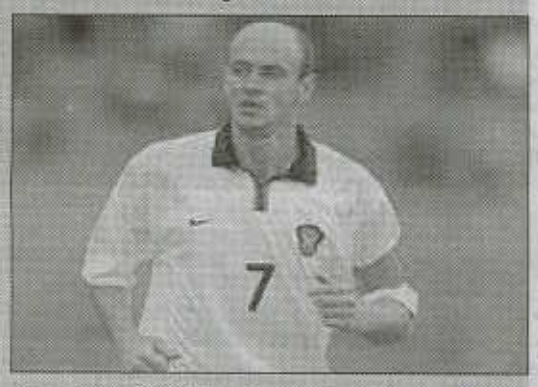
"Onopko is out, he has already left the squad and has gone home," Russia's general manager Alexander Chernov confirmed.

The 34-year-old central defender suffered the injury playing for his club Saturn Ramenskoye in last month's Russian premier league match against Rubin Kazan.

"We tried everything possible to help Onopko overcome his injury but just ran out of time," Chernov added.

Onopko's withdrawl means that the Russians have now lost both of their starting central defenders.

CSKA Moscow's Sergei Ignashevich, who also has a knee problem, left the squad on Tuesday and is due to undergo key-hole surgery next week.



Russia captain Viktor Onopko has been ruled out of Euro 2004 with a knee injury.

GRAAFSCHAP WINS PLAY-OFF

Graafschap Doetinchem clinched promotion to the Dutch first division with a 3-2 win over Excelsior Rotterdam in the final promotion/relegation playoff.

A header from Michael van der Kruis in the final minute meant Graafschap finished top of Group B with 13 points, two more than Heracles Almelo who drew 2-2 at relegated Volendam.

Excelsior opened the scoring through Mounir El Hamdaoui but a minute before the break Ilja van Leerdam equalised for Graafschap.

Van Leerdam scored again early in the second half for Graafschap, who were relegated to the second division in 2003.

Rene van Dieren levelled the score on 67 minutes but Van der Kruis's header prevented a deciding match against Heracles, who had come back from two goals down to draw with Volendam.

In Group A, Vitesse Arnhem, who retained their first division place on Monday, finished with a 2-0 win over Sparta Rotterdam and VVV Venlo beat Helmond Sport 3-0.

De Graafschap coach Frans Adelaar has led his team back into the top flight in Holland.

EURO 2004 NEWS

BECKHAM'S ANKLE ALARM

England captain David Beckham says his preparations for Euro 2004 are being affected by an ankle injury he picked up earlier this season.

The midfielder had stitches in a deep cut on his right ankle when playing for Real Madrid and the injury is still troubling Beckham -- forcing him to sit out training.

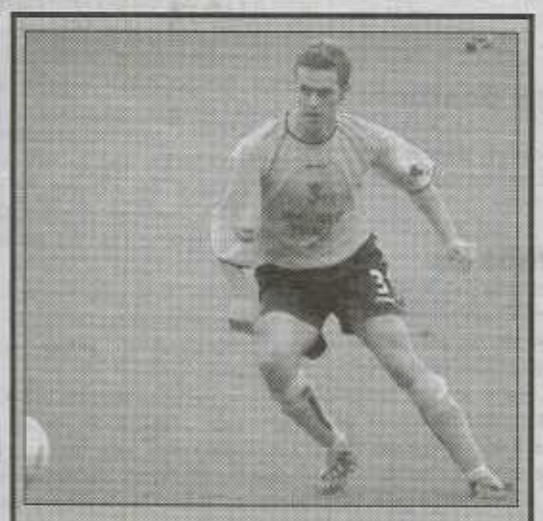
He managed to last 81 minutes of England's 1-1 international friendly draw against Japan before being replaced, but immediately placed an ice-pack on the injury.

"My ankle was sore. I had some stitches in it while playing for Real Madrid a while a go and it got infected," he told reporters.

"I got another knock in the same place towards the end of the season and it's feeling sensitive again.

"I haven't trained for the last 10 days but I don't think it's too serious."

David Beckham: Euro 2004 preparations affected by an ankle injury.



Jamie McAllister: Sings with Hearts just days after making his debut for Scotland.

HEART HEARTENED BY SIGNING

Jamie McAllister has joined Heart of Midlothian just days after winning his first international cap for Scotland in a 4-1 win against Trinidad and Tobago.

The 26-year-old left-back has signed a two-year deal with Hearts after his contract expired with Livingston.

Hearts assistant coach Peter Houston confirmed: "Left-back is a position we have been looking to fill for some time and we are delighted that Jamie has agreed to join us. I know there was competition for his signature from clubs down in England, so we're pleased that he's agreed to join Hearts." Hearts will compete in the UEFA Cup next season.

2004/05 UEFA Champions League Teams

Country	Team	Stage
Albania	Tirana	Qualifying R1
Armenia	Pyunik Yerevan	Qualifying R1
Austria	Grazer AK	Qualifying R3
Azerbaijan	Neftchi Baku	Qualifying R1
Belarus	Gomel	Qualifying R1
Belgium	Anderlecht	Qualifying R3
Belgium	Club Brugge	Qualifying R2
Bosnia-HG	äiroki Brijeg	Qualifying R1
Bulgaria	Lokomotiv Plovdiv	Qualifying R2
Croatia	Hajduk Split	Qualifying R2
Cyprus	APOEL Nicosia	Qualifying R1
Czech Rep	Ban'k Ostrava	Qualifying R3
Czech Rep	Sparta Praha	Qualifying R2
Denmark	FC Copenhagen	Qualifying R2
England	Arsenal	Group Stage
England	Chelsea	Group Stage
England	Manchester Utd	Qualifying R3
England	Liverpool	Qualifying R3
Estonia	Flora Tallinn	Qualifying R1
Faroe Islands	HB TÛrshavn	Qualifying R1
Finland	HJK Helsinki	Qualifying R1
France	Lyon	Group Stage
France	Paris St Germain	Group Stage
France	Monaco	Qualifying R3
FYR Macedonia	Pobeda Prilep	Qualifying R1
Georgia	WIT Georgia Tbilisi	Qualifying R1
Germany	Bayern Munich	Group Stage
Germany	Werder Bremen	Group Stage
Germany	Bayer Leverkusen	Qualifying R3
Greece	Panathinaikos	Group Stage
Greece	Olympiakos	Group Stage
Greece	PAOK	Qualifying R3
Holland	Ajax	Group Stage
Holland	PSV Eindhoven	Qualifying R3
Hungary	Ferencvaros	Qualifying R2
Iceland	Reykjav"k	Qualifying R1
Ireland	Shelbourne	Qualifying R1
Israel	Maccabi Haifa	Qualifying R3
Israel	Maccabi Tel-Aviv	Qualifying R2
Italy	AC Milan	Group Stage
Italy	Roma	Group Stage
Italy	Juventus	Qualifying R3
Italy	Inter Milan	Qualifying R3
Kazakhstan	Irtysh Pavlodar	Qualifying R1
Latvia	Skonto Riga	Qualifying R1
Lithuania	Kaunas	Qualifying R1
Luxembourg	Jeunesse d'Esch	Qualifying R1
Malta	Sliema Wanderers	Qualifying R1
Moldova	Sheriff Tiraspol	Qualifying R1
Norway	Rosenborg	Qualifying R2
Nthn Ireland	Linfield Belfast	Qualifying R1
Poland	Wisla Krakow	Qualifying R2
Portugal+	Porto	Group Stage
Portugal	Benfica	Qualifying R3
Romania	Dinamo Bucharest	Qualifying R2
Russia	CSKA Moscow	Qualifying R2
Scotland	Celtic	Group Stage
Scotland	Rangers	Qualifying R3
Serbia-Mont.	Crvena Zvezda	Qualifying R2
Slovakia	(Decided June 8)	Qualifying R2
Slovenia	Nova Gorica	Qualifying R1
Spain	Valencia	Group Stage
Spain	Barcelona	Group Stage
Spain	Deportivo	Qualifying R3
Spain	Real Madrid	Qualifying R3
Sweden	DjurgÂrdens	Qualifying R2
Switzerland	FC Basel	Qualifying R3
Switzerland	Young Boys	Qualifying R2
Turkey	FenerbahÂe	Qualifying R3
Turkey	Trabzonspor	Qualifying R2
Ukraine*	Dynamo Kiev	Qualifying R3
Ukraine*	Shakhtar Donetsk	Qualifying R2
Wales	Rhyl FC	Qualifying R1

** Current Position - League completed June 19*
+ Defending Champions

As defending champions Porto will be the team to beat in the 2004/05 UEFA Champions League.

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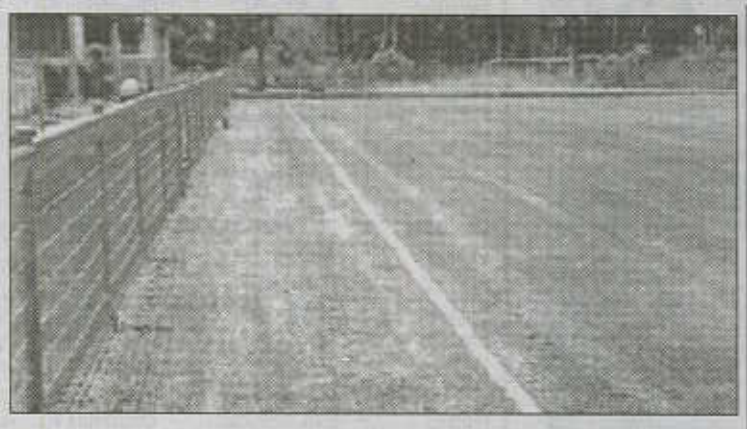
FROM THE SIDELINES

WITH GREG STOCK



Grand Final week is always a special one for players, officials and fans. The long cold nights on the training paddock, the twelve kilometre preseason runs, the memorable goals and the not so memorable performances are all a thing of the past.

But for the players from Bankstown City Lions and Belconnen Blue Devils it is all about doing your best for ninety minutes next Monday afternoon. On behalf of *ABSW* we wish both teams all the best and, as they say in the classics, 'may the best team win.'

Et tu, Bruno?

Long time St George favourite, Bruno Beddoni, has played his last game of senior football. Apparently he has sold up his family home at Minchinbury and is heading for the sun of Surfers Paradise.

The scorer of 36 goals in 44 appearance for the Saints, including nine in six games in his debut season, has taken his wife Millie and their two children off to Pacific Pines to live after his employers, Primo Caffe, the coffee distributors and cafe franchisers, asked him to head up their Queensland operations.

Beddoni had long been involved in the NSW market for his company but sees this as a new challenge and a big advancement in his career.

Sadly, at the age of 38, the superbly fit Beddoni felt he should devote more time to his family and business interests, but was sad not to go out a winner as his beloved St George bowed out of the Finals' series when downed by Belconnen 2-1 on Sunday afternoon.

Beddoni had a long and distinguished career that took in A.P.I.A. Rockdale and many other clubs including Concord and Western Rage in recent times.

At Rockdale he was under John Fleming and was especially fond of his days there and the part he played in a successful period for that club.

He also was quick to thank Manny Spanoudakis for giving him a new lease of life at St George, in a move that benefited both club and player during his spell at the Stadium.

Mondayitis

Blue Devils' coach Chris Tanzey was not as happy about his side qualifying for the NSW Premier League Grand Final on the holiday Monday as one might expect.

Tanzey and his family have booked to fly to Perth for a nine day holiday and they were due to leave on the Monday morning, expecting, as most other people were, for the big game to be staged on the Saturday night or at least the Sunday.

Tanzey, a native of Liverpool, is also planning to travel to England to see his family on Merseyside once the Perth holiday is over.

The club was meeting early in the week to see if anything could be done to ease its problems in coping with the changed date for the big event.

Coaching position

Fraser Park youth convenor Ross Anton is looking for a new coach. If you think you have what it takes you can call Rosco on 0402 300 299.

Thumbs up

This week's thumbs up goes to all those players return to their former junior clubs to help out and forgo the big pay packets, which always brings a warm fuzzy feeling to heart of FTS. Great to see that former Hurstville ZSC junior Mirko Jurilj is in negotiations with his former team and is set to resume with the club of his youth next week.

"I played a lot of my junior football with Hurstville so I see it as an opportunity to help them out," Jurilj said at Hurstville Oval last Sunday afternoon.

Thumbs down

This weeks thumbs down regards the word out of The Serbian Centre that coach Gordon Brown is the first sacking of the 2004/5 season, a season which is yet to see a ball kicked in anger. Just four weeks ago, the club was singing Brown' praises after he had guided them to the Continental Cup Final, now it seems that his services are "no longer required." FTS shall follow this one up during the week.

Looking Back - *Grand Finals in history*

1957 – The first NSW State League Grand Final saw Auburn meet Canterbury at the Sydney Sports Ground. In front of 8440 spectators the Auburn side, led by Socceroo goalkeeper Billy Henderson and English Import Len Quested, came back from 3-1 down with 13 minutes to go, to snatch an unlikely victory, with Jack Knapp scoring an unforgettable winner in the 87th minute.

1960 – After winning the Grand Final in 1959 and taking all before them during the regular season, the Prague side were sent out red hot favourites against a young Canterbury. Led by the flamboyant Leo Baumgartner the Berries pulled off a major upset to defeat Prague 5-2, with a commanding performance by future Socceroo Johnny Watkiss the highlight.

1963 – A club record crowd of 30,158 filled the Sports Ground to bursting point to watch the clash between South Coast United and A.P.I.A.. The 'Kelly gang', so named because of player/coach, ex Blackpool midfielder Jim Kelly, were too quick for the older A.P.I.A. side and racked up an impressive 4-0 win. Two goals to Mike Johnson, a John Brownlee strike and an own goal from A.P.I.A. defender Robert McKellar sealed the South Coast win.

1965 – A.P.I.A. were the first team to win Grand Finals back to back in 1965, disposing of Budapest 2-0. Between 1957 and 1969 A.P.I.A. competed in seven Grand Finals, winning three. The 1965 season also marked the retirement of A.P.I.A. and Socceroo great Joe Marston, who took over the coaching reins midway through the year, leading the club to victory in the Championship game.

1970 – The infamous mud bath Grand Final saw Yugal-Ryde pinch the Championship from under the noses of St George, led by Johnny Warren, in a quagmire at the Sydney Sports Ground. Referee Tony Boskovic strangely allowed the game to be played as rain pelted down from all angles, forming puddles of water on the pitch. The conditions nullified the short passing game of St George handing the trophy to the Leo Baumgarther coached Yugal side who revelled in the atrocious conditions.

1973 – '73 saw Marconi win their second Grand Final in a row, this time defeating Hakoah two goals to one. Promoted from the Second Division at the end of the 1969 season, the team led by Socceroo Ray Richards, Ernie Campbell and Max Tolson and coached by national coach Rale Rasic finished 5th in 1970 and 6th in 1971 before winning a unique double at the end of their fourth season in the League.

1976 – The last Grand Final before the National League commenced saw the Phil Bottalico coached A.P.I.A. defeat St George in a spiteful match at the Sports Ground. But after winning the championship and being invited to join the newly established NSL in 1977, the A.P.I.A. committee decided against the move, playing out the next two seasons in the State League before then deciding to move into the NSL.

1979 – Inter Monaro become the first club from outside of the Sydney and Illawarra area to win a First Division Grand Final, defeating a gallant Sutherland 2-1. Based in Queanbeyan Inter Monaro were subsequently promoted to the National League, enjoying limited success before returning to the State League in the 80's.

1983 – Sydney United win their second Grand Final in succession capping a golden era for the club which started back in 1977. In seven seasons between 1977 and 1983 United won three Grand Finals, but had to do things the hard way, beating an unlucky Melita Eagles on penalties. It was the first State League Grand Final to be decided through a shoot out.

1987 – Wollongong Wolves win their only Grand Final after being relegated from the National League at the end of the 1986 season, and it was the first Grand Final to feature two out-of-Sydney teams. The Wolves defeated Canberra City 2-1.

1989 – Parramatta Eagles win a second successive Championship, knocking over Canberra Deakin 2-0. A foundation member of the NSW Soccer Federation since its humble beginnings in 1957, the Eagles had finished runners-up in 1980, 1983 and 1986, before their breakthrough victory in 1988.

1992 – The first Super League Grand Final is won by Bonnyrigg who defeat Blacktown City 2-0 at Marconi Stadium. A crowd of 8,000 watch a highly attacking game where an own goal and a David Batten strike decided the issue.

1994 – Bankstown City joins that select band of teams to win successive Grand Finals putting Canterbury-Marrickville to the sword three goals to one. Under the stewardship of coach Ljube Jancev, and with a side boasting talent such as Marshall Soper, Scott Gilbert and Nick Josevski, the Lions etched their name in Grand Final folklore with a disciplined performance that saw youngsters Scott Baillie, George Souris and Anthony Surjan pick up Championship medals.

1996 – Parramatta Eagles win their first of two successive Grand Finals by beating Adamstown Rosebud 5-3 on penalties after scores were locked 1-1 at full-time. The format for this particular Grand Final involved the winners of round one playing the winners of round two which saw season Champions Sutherland denied a chance to show their wares in a semi-final. After one season the format was not surprisingly dropped.

2000 – Blacktown City beat Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2-1 to win their third straight Grand Final and become the only club in the history of the State League Grand Final to achieve that honour. During the 1990's Blacktown competed in seven Grand Finals winning in 1991, 1998, 1999 and 2000 setting a benchmark not seen since the halcyon days of A.P.I.A. in the 1960's.

Premier League

2000/1 – Blacktown City were relegated to the runners-up podium after Bonnyrigg won the inaugural Premier League Grand Final 3-1. Featuring the likes of Robbie Gomez, Stewart Van Bentum, Michael Hawrysiuk and David Reid the White Eagles came back from a midseason coaching change, which saw former national team goalkeeper Greg Woodhouse installed, to win the game in convincing fashion.

2001/2 – Parramatta Eagles, coached by Tam Finlayson, finished the second Premier League season in top spot, winning a tightly contested Grand Final at Marconi Stadium 1-0. The goal scorer was veteran defender Mark Reveley who threw his bulky frame at a corner midway through the first half and etched his name in Grand Final history.

2002/3 – Arguably the most passionate Grand Final seen in recent memory, the highly charged atmosphere at Lambert Park came alive for the clash between A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt and Blacktown City. For the third straight season the Demons were denied the trophy, beaten 3-1 by a scintillating second half from A.P.I.A. who scored all three goals via former Socceroo Zlatko Arambasic. When coach Les De Celis and captain Damon Langan held the trophy aloft it was the first time since 1976 that the famous name of A.P.I.A. had won a federation Grand Final.

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RETRAVISION

Retravision NSW Premier League Finals Series 2003/04

PRELIMINARY FINAL

Red hot Devils

By Paul Goodwin

Despite St George bringing back its two powerhouses in Gabriel Mendez and Bruno Beddoni it was unable to halt an indonitable Belconnen team, intent on seeing the ACT in the Grand Final.

In a typically competitive Finals' match at the McKellar Soccer Centre on Saturday afternoon Sydney visitors St George, showing plenty of enterprise, were unlucky to not secure the breakthrough in the first half and the sides stayed locked together.

But all that changed in a dramatic second half when the combination of Daniel Macor and Ilija Prenzoski worked their magic to propel the Blue Devils to a spectacular win.

Alex Castro, again a leading player for his side, sent Prenzoski away down the left in the 58th minute and with Macor in support the pair ran at the Saints' defence.

After twice exchanging passes the pair got into the box and after Prenzoski had his shot saved initially by Ricardo Patrizi Macor then bundled the ball over the line to give his side the early lead.

St George were shaken, having looked the better side to that point but battled away only to suffer a second setback in the 78th. Once again Castro was the man who got things moving. He sent a searching pass out right to Mike Katz whose cross to the far post was accepted by that man Macor, again, who found the net easily at close range with the St George defence helpless to react.

Throwing on three substitutes near the end the visitors managed to pull one goal back in the 84th minute. Mirko Jurilj sent the ball long to Stuart Young in the centre and the former Wollongong Wolves star found Bove out wide. Bove got down the right, well, sending over a deep cross which was met brilliantly by Lagoudakis whose low, rocket like shot went across the goal and in at the far post.

The game went into stoppage time with Belconnen defending as well as they have all season to hang on for the 2-1 win.

Belconnen had caused some first half problems through Macor and Prenzoski, but good covering defence, particularly by Simon Verrender and Mirko Jurilj who appeared to have the Blue Devils' danger men's measure.

Belconnen Blue Devils	Banc Trade	2
St George Saints	Sydney	1

St George dictated the early proceedings with skipper Gabriel Mendez always in the thick of the action and directing the play. It was a close call for Belconnen in the 25th minute when Raphael Bove sprung the offside trap and sent Stuart Young through to face Tony Giannasca, who showed good anticipation to race out and block the effort with his legs.

Nothing should be taken away from Belconnen's win as they were well organised as ever and disciplined, but the loss must have stung St George, who provided so much of the good football in the match and looked to have their opponents' measure for much of the game.

The first half chances, alone, should have delivered them the result they were looking for

When Young burst through and set up Cristian Cevenini in the 36th, for instance, despite the attentions of Toplica Popovich Cevenini was able to get the ball over to Bruno Beddoni only for the veteran to fail to connect, mistiming his shot inside the six yard area. Two minutes earlier when Jurilj fed Cevenini, following a nice lay off by Beddoni, Raphael Bove could only skew his effort across the face of the goal.

Beddoni also had a chance at the end of the half when he turned smartly in the box, but could only steer the ball wide from a tight angle, while Macor and Prenzoski looked set to open their account a moment or so earlier, only for a tough tackle inside the area to deny Prenzoski a real scoring opportunity.

Once St George fell behind the Blue Devils really began to control the match and their second goal almost killed off the Saint's challenge.

Full credit then to the Sydney visitors for fighting back and the injection of the under-utilised George Lagoudakis was instrumental in that.

He had already shown signs of life before scoring and it would have been interesting to see what might have happened had he been thrown into the fray a little earlier.

Belconnen were well served by the full strength backline, Oscar Zamora very effective and both Popovich and Pietrukowski always in control. Castro ran things well in the middle and had a willing ally in Elliot Zwangobani.

The Saints were playing to their ability but suffered from a poor delivery in the six yard area, growing increasingly frustrated as the game wore on and chances had not been put away.

Belconnen skipper, Tony Giannasca, had a faultless game in goal in a welcome return to full form for this critical match.

Soaring above the crowd: Saints keeper Richard Patrizi snatches a ball before the eager Belconnen forwards pounce

A match of sorts: Adrian Dowling attempts to keep Saints captain Gabriel Mendez out of the action (top), *and a St George player considers would could have been* (below)

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS 2
(D Macor 58', 78')
ST GEORGE SAINTS 1
(G Lagoudakis 84')
at McKellar Soccer Centre, McKellar

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS: Tony Giannasca (C), Adrian Dowling, Lee Pietrukowski, Nic Purdue, Oscar Zamora, Elliot Zwangobani, Michael Katz, Toplica Popovich, Alex Castro, Ilija Prenzoski (Matt Valeri 68), Daniel Macor (Patrick Lloyd 86)
Subs not used: RGK Jimmy Carr, Adam Williams, Anthony Galliozzi
Coach: Chris Tanzey

ST GEORGE SAINTS: Ricardo Patrizi, Simon Verrender, Ivan Zelic, Mirko Jurilj, Dean Culina (Ante Daur 73), Vince Savoca, Raphael Bove, Gabriel Mendez (C), Cristian Cevenini (George Lagoudakis 80), Bruno Beddoni (James Kovas 65), Stuart Young
Subs not used: RGK Phil Weston, Max Sevares
Coach: Manny Spanoudakis

Referee: Alex Spiroski
Assistant Referees: Alistair Coe and Gary Vandeburgt
Fourth Official: Ben Williams
Penalties: Nil

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A year in review with ABSW

CENTRAL COAST UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB

03/04 Position: 11
02/03 Position: 11

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: The playing ranks have undergone some transformation under Jim Foley and Andrew Ollier and it may take some time for the new team to settle down, in contrast to past seasons when the team has began faster than many other outfits. More patience may be needed next time.

Hindsight: The lack of a proven striker cost the club dearly. Nathan Byrn had some good games but the pre-season promise shown by Jamie Subat failed to turn into a goal bonanza during the season proper and he saw out most of the season in Grade 20s.

The defence was under pressure most of the time and despite a capable keeper in Matt Trott, opposition sides tended to score freely against the Coast and that cost the club dearly.

Crystal ball: Coast coach Jim Foley has been re-appointed, with the club looking to build on the youth programme established during the first season of the coach's tenure. Foley saw great promise in a number of his younger charges and urged the club to take the long term view and not reflect too harshly on the club's finishing position or points haul for the season, or its dismal home record.

03/04 Position: 9
02/03 Position: 2

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: One of the original federation clubs of 1957, A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt are considered the side to beat this year having won last years Championship in a crushing 3-1 win over Blacktown City.

In what will be their 50th year the club is planning a huge year of celebration and would like nothing more than to make it back-to-back titles.

Hindsight: Far from being the side to beat, the Tigers turned out to be less than heroic, and let their supporters down big time.

They rarely showed any glimpses of the 02/03 Championship side, and went from bad to worse as the season unfolded, and even their dim hopes of making the play-offs faded soon after the half way stage.

Goals almost dried up completely from Zlatko Arambasic and James Monie, with perhaps only Norman Tome showing signs of still having what it takes at this level.

The defence was also out of form all season and the midfield never really got going.

Crystal Ball: Nobody seems aware of what might happen next season after such a let down this year.

The lack of young players coming through into the senior ranks is worrying and maybe the club will want to try to encourage more of the successful Grade 20 players to make the step up to the senior ranks next season.

03/04 Position: 10
02/03 Position: 3

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: Bonnyrigg will be thereabouts, as always, when Finals time come around and all eyes will be upon them when they turn out this weekend in the first games of the pre-season series: It will be interesting to see if they can live up to their billing as the tournament favourites.

Hindsight: A stuttering start to the season, a change of coach soon after the mid-summer break and little in the way of changed fortunes led to a permanent replacement in Gordon Brown being appointed.

Brown did well and signed well, but found the season had flown before he could bring his side back down to earth.

Crystal Ball: Even though the White Eagles lost the Continental Tyres Cup Final, coach Gordon Brown was re-appointed and some stability seemed to have been established for the future.

Then the blow came this week when Brown, after spending some time at the club on Thursday, without any hint of what was to come, was told at the weekend that a new committee had been elected and his contract for next season would not be fulfilled.

A few new players and some future planning by Brown's successor and the club could be back among the high achievers again next summer. But much will depend on who that successor is and whether stability can berestored once more.

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS

03/04 Position: 4
02/03 Position: 1

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: This summer Blacktown should again be the benchmark team and benchmark club.

The stadium, with its 1200 seat grandstand, offers the best to the supporter and the team always plays dashing, attractive football. The Demons will be exciting to watch wherever they play.

Hindsight: Injuries, players coming and going and some terrible inconstencies, especially at The Gabbie, cost the Demons dearly.

They lost Paul Urlovic on whom they pinned many of their early hopes to overseas and had a limited budget to work with that precluded bringing in players as others became indisposed.

Tony Faria proved a huge hit but was unable to maintain full fitness while players like Ben Willard and Marcus Phillips also suffered from injuries at key times and little was seen of the latter player towards the end of the campaign.

His loss may have been the difference between coming fourth and coming first in the final analysis.

Crystal Ball: Blacktown are always there or there about. With a stronger competition next season the Demons will be keen to compete and should open the purse strings a little to add to the basic squad left over from this season.

There is no reason why they cannot be among the leading lights again when the former NSL clubs return to the fold.

03/04 Position: 2
02/03 Position: 9

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: "We have been pleased with the boys we have signed and I feel we will be a very competitive unit," Saints' coach, Manny Spanoudakis said.

The club wanted to be competitive and improve on its poor showing last season.

Hindsight: They looked home and hosed at the half way mark and just beyond, yet a late season slump saw them come back to the field and surrender the lead in the penultimate round of the season having held it in a vice like grip for much of the 2003/04 term.

The signing of Stuart Young failed to inspire the side to even greater efforts; the loss of Daniel Watkins, late in the season, seemed to be an unfortunate catalyst for change and it was downhill all the way after that.

Crystal Ball: The club did not anticipate a top two finish and has something to build on now for next year, which was always the ambition of Spanoudakis and his team.

The young players like George Lagoudakis and James Kovas have made an impact and should be part of the plans for the new season.

The halo slipped late in the season, but being undone by Blue Devils was always their main fear and so it proved. They will have learned a lot from the experience and be back next year to try again.

03/04 Position: 12
02/03 Position: 6

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: "A much improved squad sees them as likely Semi-final contenders"

Post Season Reality Check: Never even got to first base and were always the odds-on favourites for the drop. Relegated.

Hindsight: Two sacked coaches, an under performing squad, locker room revolts - the stuff that trashy airport novels are made from. A general lack of stability in the coaches dugout washed through the dressing room seeing the club post it's worst season since 1974.

Crystal Ball: Hard work and persistence at the top level to rebuild the club via the Winter Super League. Rumours abound that former Wolves boss Ron Corry could be the man entrusted to take the Berries back to the Premier League next winter.

03/04 Position: 8
02/03 Position: 5

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: "May struggle to make an impact with a team based largely on talented juniors."

Post Season Reality Check: Exceeded all expectations to finish mid table, and finished the season as one of the form sides of the competition

Hindsight: A mid season slump where they didn't win a game for almost two months cost the club any chance for the post season. At the end it was a mere three competition points and just five goals that separated them from fifth position and a crack at the post season.

Crystal Ball: More rebuilding work from coach Trevor Morgan. The youngsters he bought into the squad will be another year older and if they can find it within their means to secure a couple of more experienced players the Eagles could be a real dark horse for next season.

03/04 Position: 7
02/03 Position: 8

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: "Will be hovering around the top five by seasons end"

Post Season Reality Check: Did hover around the top five for most of the year only to fall apart in the last four weeks of the season and finish a disappointing seventh

Hindsight: Ran out of steam in the last month. Beat the then league leaders St George but were beaten by Canterbury-Marrickville and Parramatta Eagles to finish a game outside the top five.

Crystal Ball: The reappointment of Tony Rasmussen. A couple more quality additions could really help out the clubs depth, which was under severe pressure at key stages during the season.

03/04 Position: 6
02/03 Position: 6

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: "Has the squad to make the top five"

Post Season Reality Check: Almost, but just not quite good enough. Within a win of the top five.

Hindsight: The early departure of Bill Pilovski as coach did not get the club off to a good start through Ivan Petkovic did manage to put some points together mid season. Lacked the consistency to leap into the top five.

Crystal Ball: An off-season clean out of the playing roster and the reappointment of Petkovic should be high on the priority list. A quality striker who can score regularly is high on their shopping list.

03/04 Position: 5
02/03 Position: Winter Super League

ABSW Pre-Season Prediction: "May struggle with the step up in class"

Post Season Reality Check: An amazing season in which they achieved a Cup Final and top five appearance in their debut Premier League season

Hindsight: A perceived lack of quality on the playing roster was more than made up for by the coaching talents of Yasin Ozdenak. A truely unique and talented coach.

Crystal Ball: Up or down, depending on whether Ozdenak stays for another year. Need to sign three quality strikers including a playmaker to take the next step.

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RETRAVISION

Retravision NSW Premier League Finals Series 2003/04

Final set to burn the house down

The Blue Devils go into the game as slight favourites based on an impressive season that has seen them beat Bankstown in Sydney already.

A double in the League gave the Canberra side the advantage going into the Major Semi Final but the extra time loss showed that there had been little between the two sides in the game.

This time the defence should be tighter and the ACT team can be expected to perform to their potential and annexe the trophy to complete the double.

What a difference a year in football makes. Last season the Lions were one of a few teams battling it out to avoid relegation, this season the club has enjoyed one of its best seasons in years culminating in its fourth Grand Final appearance in eleven years. The difference is undoubtedly coach Andy Papoulias.

The Greek born, former United States international has transformed the club inside six months introducing a new found discipline and commitment which had for years been the club's achilles heel.

Throw into the mix a few handy additions – Marc Hoenselaars, Sean Babic, Steve Liavas and Milan Bosnar amongst others and a superb comeback season from Golden Boot winner Matthew Borg, and the rest is history.

"It has been an excellent season from the team and I am very proud for what we have achieved so far," Papoulias said, "there has been a lot of hardwork put in by a lot of people, but to achieve a Grand Final appearance has exceeded our expectations."

FORMBOOK

Bankstown have appeared in four state league Grand Finals in the past eleven seasons and have a perfect record of three from three.

Their last appearance in a season decider came in the 2001 Winter Super League Grand Final when they defeated Manly-Warringah.

Prior to that they achieved a rare double in defeating Blacktown City 1-0 and Canterbury-Marrickville 3-1 in 1993 and 1994. Bankstown have recently defeated St George 2-1 and Belconnen 4-3 in both their semi-final appearances.

Only in the Finals match did Belconnen succumb at last to the Lions. A long run of matches without defeat leading into this game augers well for Belconnen, and on neutral turf we should see both sides evenly matched.

THE LEAD-UP

While Belconnen and St. George were slugging it out in Canberra, the Bankstown squad enjoyed a much needed weekend off with family and friends. Resting some tired legs, coach Andy Papoulias ran a pool and aerobic session last week instead of regular training.

The Lions will train Monday, Wednesday and Friday night at Jensen Park before a light session on Sunday afternoon from where the players will go into camp overnight. Parramatta Power coach Nick Theodoropoulos is also lending his talents to the Lions cause and will be speaking to the players at a team meeting this week.

The players will rise on Monday for breakfast, have a team meeting and walk and make their way to Marconi Stadium by bus.

Belconnen took time to work their way into the game against St George but once in front they hardly looked like caving in.

COACHES COMMENT

Andy Papoulias – "Our preparation has been excellent and we are confident of a bold showing this week. Grand Finals are so often a toss of the coin, a mistake or a missed chance can be the difference but if we play to our fullest potential I believe we can win the game."

Chris Tanzey is unsure about who can play in the Grand Final but does not expect Oscar Zamora to be available.

"We will do well to get eleven players on the park now that the Grand Final is on Monday. Many of the players had planned to do things right after the game, so we will have to look at what we are doing early this week."

WHO'S HOT

Matthew Borg – Without question he is the man who will make or break the Lions chances.

Whenever the side has been down and needed his inspiration in front of goals he has delivered, his lethal right foot earning him the title of Golden Boot winner as the leading League goal scorer.

The ankle injury which has dogged his last six weeks seems to be well behind him and 'Mr Excitement', as he is known down at Jensen Park, will be one to watch.

After last week's suggestion that one if not both of the strikers might be below their best, the pair responded with a class performance that showed how they led the side to the Premiership.

"They may not have scored goals every week lately but we have been happy with both of them," Tanzey said.

"Danny Macor has done all I could have asked of him, shielding the ball well and doing a ton of work off the ball. Ilija has also done well and we know what they can do and they do it every week for us."

WHO'S NOT

Marc Hoenselaars, the other half of the 'dynamic duo', has not had the best of years with an ankle injury curtailing his effectiveness.

Moved into the wide midfield position his form has been patchy at best – time for the big fella to step up a gear and make this game his own.

This is a hard one. In a team made up of players who play as a team there are no weak links. None of the players are playing poorly at the moment.

The short answer is nobody. Every player is pulling his weight right now.

INJURIES AND SUSPENSIONS

The Lions will be without the services of midfielder Anthony Doumanis with a chronic leg injury and they also have Milan Bosnar in doubt with a knee problem.

Coach Andy Papoulias is confident Bosnar will be fit enough to take some part in the match.

The major casualty will be playmaker George Nohra who will be suspended after receiving two yellow cards in the Semi Final against Belconnen

David Arranz will miss the game through suspension having incurred a four game stretch.

Ilija Prenzoski came off after a heavy challenge with St George keeper, Ricardo Patrizi, and his leg was a source of some concern at the club.

"Ilija does not usually like to come off," explained coach Chris Tanzey in the club after last Sunday's triumph, "but this time he could not move and it was not long before we had to take him out of the fray."

The other players all appear to be fit and raring to avenge themselves on Bankstown on Monday afternoon.

WHY BANKSTOWN CAN'T WIN

So often Bankstown sides of the past have under achieved through their own lack of self-discipline.

The Lions can expect this to be a tough and bruising affair where a senseless act of ill-discipline can cost a side a championship.

*The Jeckyll and Hyde goalkeeping of Zlatko Josevski has been brilliant on occasion but diabolical on others.

His season this year has been superb but he is inclined to the odd 'brain explosion' and Lions fans will have their fingers crossed that one won't surface this week.

The suspension of George Nohra and the injury to Anthony Doumanis leave the Lions without a noted playmaker.

Coach Andy Papoulias has pencilled in three names for the vacant spot and will make a final decision in the hours before the game, but the question still remains – can the Lions win without a playmaker?

WHY BANKSTOWN CAN WIN

The sublime coaching talents of Andy Papoulias see him as one of the favourites for the coveted 'Coach of the Year' honour. Despite going over a couple of minor speed bumps on the road to the Grand Final, he has his side primed ready for a big performance on Monday afternoon.

The Lions are ruthlessly efficient in showcasing their fast counterattacking style. Expect the likes of Robbie Gomez, Steve Liavas and Marc Hoenselaars to run at players from deep and open up the space for strikers Matthew Borg and Sean Babic.

With the tall frames of Richard Luksic and Paul Wearne controlling the air it could well be a quiet night for the forwards of Belconnen.

WHY BELCONNEN CAN WIN

The Blue Devils can win because they are doing what they did all season, bottling opposition sides up, scoring goals regularly - a goal in every game they have played is a great record - and playing as a well drilled unit that can break from defence to attack in a second, something St George learned the hard way when going a goal down last weekend.

WHY BELCONNEN CAN'T WIN

The only reason they may not be able to win is because they lack the ability to do something out of the ordinary, to deliver the unexpected.

Unlike Bankstown and many other sides there are few match winners they can conjure up from the bench. If they need someone to turn the game on its head there is no one there.

The bench is usually made up of defensive types or midfield workers. A surprise striker is unlikely to emerge should they need one here. Bankstown had their measure last time and will know what to expect once more.

Winning is not something Belconnen does with ease, they have to work at it. Bankstown may demand more than mere hard work from the Blue Devils to lose this one.

GRAND FINAL

First Grade
Belconnen Blue Devils vs Bankstown City Lions
3pm Monday 14th June at Marconi Stadium

Grade 20
Bonnyrigg White Eagles vs Parramatta Eagles
12pm Monday 14th June at Marconi Stadium

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PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE - ROUND 15:

GRADE 13: Macarthur Rams 0 Marconi Stallions 2, Central Coast FC 1 Newcastle United 0, Wollongong Wolves 2 Sydney United 3, Bankstown City Cubs 3 Parramatta Eagles 1, Hajduk Wanderers United 3 Sydney Olympic 1, Sutherland Shire Sharks 1 Gladesville Spirit SC 4, Blacktown City Demons 2 A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers 0.

GRADE 14: Macarthur Rams 0 Marconi Stallions 6, Central Coast FC 0 Newcastle United 2, Wollongong Wolves 2 Sydney United 0, Bankstown City Cubs 0 Parramatta Eagles 1, Hajduk Wanderers United 0 Sydney Olympic 1, Sutherland Shire Sharks 1 Gladesville Spirit SC 1, Blacktown City Demons 6 A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers 0.

GRADE 15: Macarthur Rams 1 Marconi Stallions 0, Central Coast FC 1 Newcastle United 0, Wollongong Wolves 0 Sydney United 3, Bankstown City Cubs 0 Parramatta Eagles 0, Hajduk Wanderers United 1 Sydney Olympic 4, Sutherland Shire Sharks 0 Gladesville Spirit SC 0, Blacktown City Demons 1 A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers 1.

GRADE 16: Macarthur Rams 1 Marconi Stallions 1, Central Coast FC 1 Newcastle United 1, Wollongong Wolves 1 Sydney United 2, Bankstown City Cubs 0 Parramatta Eagles 1, Hajduk Wanderers United 0 Sydney Olympic 2, Sutherland Shire Sharks 1 Gladesville Spirit SC 2, Blacktown City Demons 2 A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers 0.

GRADE 18: Macarthur Rams 2 Marconi Stallions 1, Central Coast FC vs Newcastle United Abandoned, Wollongong Wolves 3 Sydney United 1, Bankstown City Cubs 0 Parramatta Eagles 1, Hajduk Wanderers United 0 Sydney Olympic 2, Sutherland Shire Sharks 1 Gladesville Spirit SC 1, Blacktown City Demons 0 A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers 0.

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Blacktown City	15	11	1	3	43	12	31	34
Sydney United	15	10	2	3	36	16	20	32
Parramatta Eagles	15	8	5	2	27	8	19	29
Stallions	15	9	2	4	32	17	15	29
Hajduk Wanderers	15	9	2	4	20	13	7	29
Bankstown City Cubs	15	8	3	4	24	15	9	27
Gladesville Spirit SC	15	8	1	6	33	29	4	25
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	15	7	3	5	19	16	3	24
Sydney Olympic	15	5	2	8	14	21	-7	17
Newcastle United FC	15	3	5	7	18	26	-8	14
Central Coast United	15	4	1	10	8	22	-14	13
Wollongong Wolves	15	2	5	8	14	26	-12	11
Sutherland Shire	15	2	3	10	10	36	-26	9
Macarthur Rams	15	1	1	13	8	49	-41	4

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Blacktown City	15	11	2	2	37	10	27	35
Marconi Stallions	15	10	4	1	45	10	35	34
Parramatta Eagles	15	10	3	2	25	6	19	33
Gladesville Spirit SC	15	9	4	2	18	8	10	31
Wollongong Wolves	15	9	1	5	28	18	10	28
Sydney Olympic	15	6	5	4	18	9	9	23
Newcastle United FC	15	6	5	4	21	18	3	23
Bankstown City Cubs	15	6	4	5	22	18	4	22
Sutherland Shire	15	4	4	7	23	19	4	16
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	15	3	4	8	13	28	-15	13
Hajduk Wanderers	15	2	6	7	17	26	-9	12
Sydney United	15	3	1	11	11	31	-20	10
Macarthur Rams	15	2	3	10	13	44	-31	9
Central Coast United	15	0	2	13	7	53	-46	2

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Parramatta Eagles	15	11	2	2	26	4	22	35
Marconi Stallions	15	11	2	2	24	8	16	35
Sydney Olympic	15	10	2	3	31	16	15	32
Blacktown City	15	9	2	4	32	18	14	29
Gladesville Spirit SC	15	7	5	3	21	11	10	26
Central Coast United	15	7	4	4	18	19	-1	25
Newcastle United FC	15	7	2	6	25	18	8	23
Macarthur Rams	15	5	3	7	18	32	-14	18
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	15	3	7	5	10	13	-3	16
Bankstown City Cubs	14	4	4	6	8	12	-4	16
Sydney United	14	4	2	8	16	19	-3	14
Wollongong Wolves	15	1	6	8	12	26	-14	9
Sutherland Shire	15	0	6	9	11	24	-13	6
Hajduk Wanderers	15	1	1	13	7	40	-33	4

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 16

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Parramatta Eagles	15	11	2	2	27	10	17	35
Sydney Olympic	15	8	3	4	23	11	12	27
Marconi Stallions	15	7	5	3	20	12	8	26
Sydney United	15	8	2	5	22	18	4	26
Bankstown City Cubs	15	7	4	4	22	12	10	25
Gladesville Spirit SC	15	6	6	3	16	12	4	24
Blacktown City	15	5	6	4	16	14	2	21
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	15	6	3	6	17	19	-2	21
Sutherland Shire	15	6	1	8	19	21	-2	19
Wollongong Wolves	15	4	6	5	18	17	1	18
Newcastle United FC	15	4	6	5	20	23	-3	18
Macarthur Rams	15	3	5	7	18	23	-5	14
Central Coast United	15	0	6	9	10	29	-19	6
Hajduk Wanderers	15	1	3	11	8	35	-27	6

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Marconi Stallions	15	10	3	2	32	15	17	33
Sydney Olympic	15	9	2	4	42	28	14	29
Wollongong Wolves	15	9	2	4	32	19	13	29
Blacktown City	15	9	1	5	24	14	10	28
Gladesville Spirit SC	15	8	2	5	24	20	4	26
Parramatta Eagles	15	7	4	4	29	22	7	25
Sutherland Shire	15	7	3	5	28	20	8	24
Hajduk Wanderers	15	6	2	7	23	27	-4	20
Sydney United	15	5	4	6	24	21	3	19
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	15	5	4	6	20	32	-12	19
Macarthur Rams	15	5	2	8	25	37	-12	17
Newcastle United FC	14	3	1	10	18	34	-16	10
Bankstown City Cubs	15	2	3	10	12	31	-19	9
Central Coast United	14	1	3	10	16	29	-13	6

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE COMBINED

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Marconi Stallions	75	47	16	12	153	62	91	157
Parramatta Eagles	75	47	16	12	134	50	84	157
Blacktown City	75	45	12	18	152	68	84	147
Gladesville Spirit SC	75	38	18	19	112	80	32	132
Sydney Olympic	75	38	14	23	128	85	43	128
Sydney United	74	30	11	33	109	105	4	101
Bankstown City Cubs	74	27	18	29	88	88	0	99
Wollongong Wolves	75	25	20	30	104	106	-2	95
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	75	24	21	30	79	108	-29	93
Newcastle United FC	74	23	19	32	103	119	-16	88
Sutherland Shire	75	19	17	39	91	120	-29	74
Hajduk Wanderers	75	19	14	42	75	141	-66	71
Macarthur Rams	75	16	14	45	82	185	-103	62
Central Coast United	74	12	16	46	59	152	-93	52

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE - ROUND 13:

GRADE 13: Fairfield Bulls 0 Fraser Park - Canterbury 5, Parramatta Star 1 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, Northern Tigers 0 St George 2, Hills United 0 Penrith Nepean United 2, Schofields Scorpions 2 Manly Warringah Dolphins 3, Granville Rage 1 Southern Branch 1.

GRADE 14: Fairfield Bulls 2 Fraser Park - Canterbury 2, Parramatta Star 0 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2, Northern Tigers 1 St George 2, Hills United 0 Penrith Nepean United 2, Schofields Scorpions 2 Manly Warringah Dolphins 1, Granville Rage 1 Southern Branch 1.

GRADE 15: Fairfield Bulls 2 Fraser Park - Canterbury 1, Parramatta Star 0 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4, Northern Tigers 1 St George 3, Hills United 0 Penrith Nepean United 3, Schofields Scorpions 2 Manly Warringah Dolphins 1, Granville Rage 0 Southern Branch 2.

GRADE 16: Fairfield Bulls 0 Fraser Park - Canterbury 1, Parramatta Star 1 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, Northern Tigers 0 St George 4, Hills United 1 Penrith Nepean United 0, Schofields Scorpions 0 Manly Warringah Dolphins 2, Granville Rage 3 Southern Branch 0.

GRADE 18: Fairfield Bulls 1 Fraser Park - Canterbury 1, Parramatta Star 4 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, Northern Tigers 4 St George 1, Hills United 0 Penrith Nepean United 1, Schofields Scorpions 1 Manly Warringah Dolphins 2, Granville Rage 1 Southern Branch 2.

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Manly Warringah	13	12	0	1	35	7	28	36
Parramatta Star	13	8	3	2	27	13	14	27
Bonnyrigg WE	13	7	3	3	18	9	9	24
St George	13	8	0	5	21	15	6	24
Penrith Nepean Utd	13	6	4	3	16	11	5	22
Southern Branch	13	6	3	4	21	21	0	21
Granville Rage	13	5	5	3	15	10	5	20
Fraser Pk – C'bury	13	4	3	6	20	22	-2	15
Northern Tigers	13	4	0	9	12	23	-11	12
Hills United Brumbles	13	3	2	8	15	22	-7	11
Schofield Scorpions	13	2	2	9	10	22	-12	8
Fairfield Bulls	13	0	1	12	6	41	-35	1

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
St George	13	9	3	1	31	9	22	30
Manly Warringah	13	9	1	3	23	11	12	28
Schofield Scorpions	13	8	2	3	22	14	8	26
Penrith Nepean Utd	13	7	4	2	18	8	10	25
Bonnyrigg WE	13	6	5	2	20	10	10	23
Fairfield Bulls	13	3	5	5	12	14	-2	14
Granville Rage	13	4	2	7	12	15	-3	14
Northern Tigers	13	3	4	6	15	24	-9	13
Southern Branch	13	2	6	5	12	20	-8	12
Fraser Pk – C'bury	13	2	6	5	8	21	-13	12
Hills United Brumbles	13	3	2	8	15	20	-5	11
Parramatta Star	13	0	4	9	9	31	-22	4

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Northern Tigers	13	10	2	1	22	9	13	32
Bonnyrigg WE	13	9	1	3	30	7	23	28
Schofield Scorpions	13	9	1	3	27	11	16	28
Penrith Nepean Utd	13	8	2	3	27	14	13	26
St George	13	8	1	4	23	15	8	25
Southern Branch	13	8	0	5	26	19	7	24
Hills United Brumbles	13	5	2	6	20	22	-2	17
Fraser Pk – C'bury	13	3	3	7	13	20	-7	12
Parramatta Star	13	3	3	7	15	27	-12	12
Granville Rage	13	3	1	9	14	23	-9	10
Manly Warringah	13	3	0	10	10	29	-19	9
Fairfield Bulls	13	1	0	12	11	42	-31	3

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 16

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Manly Warringah	13	10	0	3	22	6	16	30
St George	13	9	2	2	28	9	19	29
Penrith Nepean Utd	13	6	3	4	22	14	8	21
Fairfield Bulls	13	5	4	4	19	11	8	19
Parramatta Star	13	5	4	4	19	16	3	19
Bonnyrigg WE	13	5	4	4	21	19	2	19
Schofield Scorpions	13	5	2	6	21	24	-3	17
Granville Rage	13	5	1	7	17	23	-6	16
Hills United Brumbies	13	5	1	7	20	27	-7	16
Northern Tigers	13	3	3	7	13	23	-10	12
Fraser Prk - C'bury	13	3	3	7	9	24	-15	12
Southern Branch	13	2	3	8	14	29	-15	9

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Parramatta Star	13	10	1	2	47	15	32	31
Manly Warringah	13	7	5	1	32	13	19	26
Fairfield Bulls	13	6	5	2	28	16	12	23
Northern Tigers	13	7	1	5	20	17	3	22
S'field Scorpions	13	6	2	5	30	30	0	20
St George	13	5	4	4	20	27	-7	19
Hills United Brumbies	13	5	3	5	20	19	1	18
Southern Branch	13	5	3	5	21	23	-2	18
Bonnyrigg WE	13	5	2	6	26	32	-6	17
Penrith Nepean Utd	13	5	0	8	23	25	-2	15
Fraser Pk – C'bury	13	1	4	8	16	30	-14	7
Granville Rage	13	0	2	11	12	48	-36	2

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SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE COMBINED

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Manly Warringah	65	41	6	18	122	66	56	129
St George	65	39	10	16	123	75	48	127
Bonnyrigg WE	65	32	15	18	115	77	38	111
Penrith Nepean Utd	65	32	13	20	106	72	34	109
Schofield Scorpions	65	30	9	26	110	101	9	99
Parramatta Star	65	26	15	24	117	102	15	93
Northern Tigers	65	27	10	28	82	96	-14	91
Southern Branch	65	23	15	27	94	112	-18	84
Hills United Brumbies	65	21	10	34	90	110	-20	73
Granville Rage	65	17	11	37	70	119	-49	62
Fairfield Bulls	65	15	15	35	76	124	-48	60
Fraser Pk – C'bury	65	13	19	33	66	117	-51	58

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE - ROUND 13:

GRADE 13: Sydney Uni Eastern Lions 2 Bathurst 75 Western 1, Rockdale City Suns 1 Dulwich Hill 2, Ryde City 2 Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Stanmore Hawks 0 Camden Tigers 5, Belmore Hercules 1 Wollongong United 1.

GRADE 14: Sydney Uni Eastern Lions 1 Bathurst 75 Western 4, Rockdale City Suns 1 Dulwich Hill 2, Ryde City 1 Hurstville City Minotaurs 2, Stanmore Hawks 0 Camden Tigers 5, Belmore Hercules 2 Wollongong United 0.

GRADE 15: Sydney Uni Eastern Lions 3 Bathurst 75 Western 1, Rockdale City Suns 0 Dulwich Hill 1, Ryde City 4 Hurstville City Minotuars 2, Stanmore Hawks 0 Camden Tigers 5, Belmore Hercules 0 Wollongong United 3.

GRADE 16: Sydney Uni Eastern Lions 0 Bathurst 75 Western 4, Rockdale City Suns 3 Dulwich Hill 2, Ryde City 0 Hurstville City Minotaurs 2, Stanmore Hawks 0 Camden Tigers 2, Belmore Hercules 0 Wollongong United 1.

GRADE 18: Sydney Uni Eastern Lions 1 Bathurst 75 Western 3, Rockdale City Suns 0 Dulwich Hill 3, Ryde City 1 Hurstville City Minotaurs 2, Stanmore Hawks 1 Camden Tigers 2, Belmore Hercules 5 Wollongong United 0.

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Wollongong United	12	10	1	1	32	3	29	31
Camden Tigers	12	6	3	3	37	10	27	21
Belmore Hercules	12	6	3	3	23	15	8	21
SU Eastern Lions	12	5	4	3	20	16	4	19
Mt Druitt Town Ran	11	5	3	3	12	13	-1	18
Dulwich Hill	11	5	2	4	23	18	5	17
Bathurst '75/Western	11	5	2	4	18	17	1	17
Ryde City	11	4	1	6	13	30	-17	13
Rockdale City Suns	12	3	3	6	8	14	-6	12
Hurstville City Min	12	3	2	7	15	26	-11	11
Stanmore Hawks	12	0	0	12	9	48	-39	0

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Bathurst '75/Western	11	10	1	0	27	5	22	31
Belmore Hercules	12	10	1	1	24	3	21	31
Mt Druitt Town Ran	11	7	2	2	17	6	11	23
Camden Tigers	11	5	1	5	19	15	4	16
Hurstville City Mins	11	4	3	4	8	11	-3	15
Rockdale City Suns	12	3	5	4	14	13	1	14
Ryde City	11	4	2	5	12	14	-2	14
SU Eastern Lions	12	4	2	6	12	17	-5	14
Dulwich Hill	11	3	2	6	10	16	-6	11
Wollongong United	12	2	2	8	13	22	-9	8
Stanmore Hawks	12	0	1	11	7	41	-34	1

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
SU Eastern Lions	12	10	0	2	26	6	20	30
Ryde City	11	8	2	1	24	10	14	26
Wollongong United	12	6	2	4	30	20	10	20
Dulwich Hill	11	5	4	2	13	9	4	19
Rockdale City Suns	12	5	3	4	17	16	1	18
Hurstville City Min	11	5	2	4	21	14	7	17
Bathurst '75/Western	11	4	3	4	21	14	7	15
Camden Tigers	11	5	0	6	19	18	1	15
Belmore Hercules	12	4	1	7	10	28	-18	13
Mt Druitt Town Ran	11	2	0	9	10	18	-8	6
Stanmore Hawks	12	0	1	11	6	44	-38	1

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 16

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Hurstville City Min	11	8	2	1	21	9	12	26
Dulwich Hill	11	7	1	3	31	15	16	22
Camden Tigers	10	6	4	0	20	8	12	22
Wollongong United	12	6	4	2	18	10	8	22
Bathurst '75/Western	11	5	3	3	20	12	8	18
Belmore Hercules	12	5	2	5	17	15	2	17
Rockdale City Suns	11	5	2	4	16	17	-1	17
Mt Druitt Town Ran	11	4	1	6	11	13	-2	13
Ryde City	11	2	2	7	13	22	-9	8
Stanmore Hawks	12	1	2	9	9	32	-23	5
SU Eastern Lions	12	1	1	10	12	35	-23	4

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Camden Tigers	11	9	0	2	47	10	37	27
Ryde City	11	8	1	2	38	10	28	25
Dulwich Hill	11	7	2	2	34	15	19	23
Hurstville City Min	11	7	1	3	35	13	22	22
Bathurst '75/Western	11	6	3	2	23	17	6	21
Stanmore Hawks	12	6	2	4	36	17	19	20
Mt Druitt Town Ran	11	3	3	5	18	22	-4	12
SU Eastern Lions	12	4	0	8	24	29	-5	12
Belmore Hercules	12	3	2	7	23	37	-14	11
Rockdale City Suns	12	2	2	8	45	37	8	8
Wollongong United	12	0	0	12	6	122	-116	0

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE COMBINED

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Bathurst '75/Western	55	30	12	13	109	65	44	102
Camden Tigers	55	31	8	16	142	61	81	101
Dulwich Hill	55	27	11	17	111	73	38	92
Hurstville City Min	56	27	10	19	100	73	27	91
Ryde City	55	26	8	21	100	86	14	86
Belmore Hercules	60	28	9	23	97	98	-1	93
Wollongong United	60	24	9	27	99	177	-78	81
SU Eastern Lions	60	24	7	29	94	103	-9	79
Mt Druitt Town Ran	55	21	9	25	68	72	-4	72
Rockdale City Suns	59	18	15	26	100	97	3	69
Stanmore Hawks	60	7	6	47	67	182	-115	27

***S.S.I.* GIRLS YOUTH LEAGUE: ROUND 13:**

GRADE 12: Blacktown Districts 0 St George Association 2, North West Sydney Koalas 2 Central Coast FC 0, Sutherland Association 1 UNSW 0, Wollongong Wolves 1 Southern Branch 1, Marconi 1 Nepean Association 4, Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 Macarthur Rams 1.

GRADE 14: Blacktown Districts 0 St George Association 5, North West Sydney Koalas 4 Central Coast FC 1, Sutherland Association 3 UNSW 0, Wollongong Wolves 0 Southern Branch 1, Marconi 0 Nepean Association 3, Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 Macarthur Rams 0.

GRADE 16: Blacktown Districts 2 St George Association 0, North West Sydney Koalas 1 Central Coast FC 1, Sutherland Association 2 UNSW 0, Wollongong Wolves 0 Southern Branch 6, Marconi 0 Nepean Association 5, Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 Macarthur Rams 1.

S.S.I. GIRLS YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 12

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Manly Warringah	12	11	0	1	32	4	28	33
Nepean Association	12	10	1	1	43	15	28	31
Sutherland Assoc	12	10	0	2	39	7	32	30
NW Sydney Koalas	12	9	1	2	39	13	26	28
St George Assoc	12	6	2	4	17	12	5	20
Macarthur Rams	12	5	3	4	20	18	2	18
Blacktown Assoc	12	4	3	5	19	22	-3	15
UNSW	12	4	1	7	16	25	-9	13
Central Coast United	12	3	1	8	12	18	-6	10
Northern Tigers	12	2	3	7	12	33	-21	9
Marconi Stallions	12	1	4	7	13	32	-19	7
Southern Branch	12	1	3	8	5	21	-16	6
Wollongong Wolves	12	0	2	10	11	58	-47	2

S.S.I. GIRLS YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
St George Association	12	10	2	0	47	8	39	32
Manly Warringah	12	9	2	1	24	3	21	29
NW Sydney Koalas	12	8	3	1	30	8	22	27
Macarthur Rams	12	9	0	3	30	11	19	27
Nepean Association	12	8	1	3	30	8	22	25
Sutherland Association	12	6	3	3	19	5	14	21
Southern Branch	12	5	1	6	15	23	-8	16
Central Coast United	12	4	3	5	21	21	0	15
Northern Tigers	12	2	2	8	5	29	-24	8
Marconi Stallions	12	1	4	7	7	30	-23	7
Wollongong Wolves	12	1	2	9	2	21	-19	5
Blacktown Association	12	1	2	9	2	31	-29	5
UNSW	12	0	3	9	4	38	-34	3

S.S.I. GIRLS YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 16

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Southern Branch	12	11	0	1	61	6	55	33
NW Sydney Koalas	12	9	2	1	55	15	40	29
Macarthur Rams	12	9	1	2	36	13	23	28
Manly Warringah	12	8	2	2	48	17	31	26
Nepean Association	12	8	1	3	50	18	32	25
Sutherland Assoc	12	7	2	3	22	11	11	23
Central Coast Utd	12	4	3	5	19	20	-1	15
Blacktown Assoc	12	5	0	7	25	29	-4	15
St George Assoc	12	4	0	8	20	33	-13	12
Marconi Stallions	12	3	1	8	16	32	-16	10
Wollongong Wolves	12	2	1	9	12	46	-34	7
Northern Tigers	12	1	1	10	5	50	-45	4
UNSW	12	0	0	12	4	83	-79	0

BOYS METROPOLITAN LEAGUE: ROUND 9:

GRADE 11: Canterbury Association 2 Eastern Suburbs Association 0, Central Coast Association 0 Manly Warringah Association 1, Nepean Association 1 Gladesville Hornsby Association 1, Granville Association 1 Ku-ring-gai Association 0, Bankstown Association 1 Southern Districts 2, Blacktown Association 5 Southern Branch 0, Illawarra Association 1 Sutherland Association 0, St George Association 2 Macarthur Association 0.

GRADE 12: Canterbury Association 2 Eastern Suburbs Association 0, Central Coast Association 1 Manly Warringah Association 1, Nepean Association 0 Gladesville Hornsby Association 1, Granville Association 1 Ku-ring-gai Association 0, Bankstown Association 1 Southern Districts 0, Blacktown Association 3 Southern Branch 0, Illawarra Association 0 Sutherland Association 2, St George Association 2 Macarthur Association 0.

attack UNDER 11 METROPOLITAN LEAGUE Northern Conference

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Nepean	9	6	1	2	18	10	8	19
Granville	9	5	3	1	16	8	8	18
Canterbury	9	5	2	2	14	10	4	17
Gladesville-Hornsby	9	3	5	1	14	13	1	14
Manly-Warringah	9	4	1	4	16	13	3	13
Central Coast	9	3	0	6	11	16	-5	9
Ku-Ring-Gai	9	1	4	4	7	11	-4	7
Eastern Suburbs	9	0	2	7	6	21	-15	2

attack UNDER 11 METROPOLITAN LEAGUE Southern Conference

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Sutherland	9	7	0	2	17	10	7	21
Southern Districts	9	6	2	1	20	6	14	20
Blacktown	9	6	1	2	25	6	19	19
Illawarra	8	5	1	2	15	9	6	16
St George	9	4	1	4	12	11	1	13
Macarthur	9	2	1	6	6	14	-8	7
Southern Branch	9	1	1	7	5	25	-20	4
Bankstown	8	0	1	7	2	21	-19	1

attack UNDER 12 METROPOLITAN LEAGUE Northern Conference

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Gladesville-Hornsby	9	8	1	0	19	2	17	25
Manly-Warringah	9	3	5	1	15	10	5	14
Central Coast	9	3	4	2	13	14	-1	13
Canterbury	9	4	1	4	8	12	-4	13
Nepean	9	2	3	4	7	6	1	9
Granville	9	2	3	4	6	12	-6	9
Ku-Ring-Gai	9	2	2	5	5	11	-6	8
Eastern Suburbs	9	1	3	5	13	19	-6	6

attack UNDER 12 METROPOLITAN LEAGUE Southern Conference

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Blacktown	9	8	1	0	30	2	28	25
Bankstown	8	5	2	1	13	5	8	17
St George	9	4	1	4	10	11	-1	13
Sutherland	9	3	3	3	8	9	-1	12
Macarthur	9	3	1	5	7	11	-4	10
Southern Districts	9	2	4	3	4	11	-7	10
Illawarra	8	3	0	5	10	14	-4	9
Southern Branch	9	1	0	8	4	23	-19	3

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Tigers rule the roost

By Paul Goodwin

Northern Tigers vs Fairfield Bulls

Following their hammering of Sutherland at the same ground seven days earlier Northern Tigers stepped out at Parklands Oval to face Fairfield Bulls, whose season had suffered a setback with the loss the previous week at Dulwich Hill.

This was an interesting test for Fred Mesiti's men, to see if they could reproduce the same devastating form they had shown against the Sharks.

It was also a big challenge for Hugh McCrory and his men after their loss at Arlington Oval.

Fairfield have been hard hit by injuries this season and the loss of Ben Green early on was a big blow for The Bulls. Here they were looking very positive going forward yet unable to break down a defence that Northern Tigers organised well in front of new keeper Andrew Crews.

The threat from new Tigers' signing, Adam Foti, back after a spell in Greece following an unsuccessful sojourn to Poland, was a major one and he was well aided and abetted by the presence of Matthew Frost.

After a shot from Michael Mouyis had been taken well by the Fairfield keeper, Claudio Fernandez, down low in the 8th minute, the game swung from end to end with Bulls' skipper, Johnny Ghisso, driving his side from the middle of the park with plenty of creative energy.

The Bulls attacked with repeated and renewed efforts as the game wore on and Fairfield never shirked their task, but they fell behind to a Tigers' goal in the 27th minute.

Adam Foti, leading the Northern line with such commitment, had almost caught Fernandez out in the 16th minute, when racing onto a quickly taken Jason Mesiti free kick and heading goalwards, only for the tall Fernandez to brilliantly tip the ball over the bar.

Foti was also the man to break the deadlock, in the 27th minute, with a low shot that was cleverly angled away from the keeper and nestled in the bottom left corner of the Fairfield net.

The move had been begun by Mesiti, who introduced Frost into the play and who then slipped the ball to his attacking partner. Mesiti had also set up Foti for a chance in the 21st which the big striker saw flash wide of the left upright.

In the 33rd the Tigers almost doubled their slender 1-0 lead, when Mouyis got away down the right and sent over a pinpoint cross, which Foti met with a firm header that flashed just wide of the left post.

The second half was tighter still but Fairfield were not too happy about conceding a goal within a minute of the restart.

Leigh Gunn had sent a shot over the bar for the Bulls moments before Foti struck again.

A throw on the right by Mouyis saw Erik Paartalu thread the ball in behind the defence for the alert Foti to race onto and plant past Fernandez.

The Tigers had control of the game thanks to a sound backline and a confident new keeper as well as a strike force that kept the opposition defenders on the back foot.

For the Tigers Danny Hurwitz and Damon Thompson were able to play some of their best defensive football and demonstrate what makes it so hard for good sides to break them down.

NORTHERN TIGERS 2
(A Foti 27', 46')
FAIRFIELD BULLS 0

NORTHERN TIGERS: Andrew Crews, Michael Mouyis (Nick Femia 81), Anthony Oppedisano, Danny Hurwitz, Damon Thompson (C), Jason Mesiti (Tom Mikulski 72), Marcus Frost (Matt Godwin 76), Cameron Jones, Matt Hunter, Adam Foti, Erik Paartalu
Sub not used: RGK Luke Femia, Maurice Aliberti

FAIRFIELD BULLS: Claudio Fernandez, Paul Jurcevic, Dominic Oliverio, Ryan O'Shea, Johnny Ghisso (C), Ryan Jones, David Harding, Kory Babington, Agyie Akwasi (Javier Mancino 58), Samir Issa (Lisandro Bertis 88), Leigh Gunn
Sub not used: RGK Jeremy Lawrence, Brendan Mitrovich, Chris Spinos

Referee: Simon Micalef
Assistant Referees: Adrian Hale and Richard Baker
Fourth Official: Jason Blackwood
Yellow Cards: Northern Tigers: Cameron Jones 85 Fairfield: Ryan Jones 85, Leigh Gunn 87

Hadjuk Wanderers and Hurstville ZSC played out a 90 minute thriller which saw Hurstville lock it up in the 56th minute with a Jason Vella goal. For a the full report turn to page 23

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE: ROUND 14:

FIRST GRADE: Dulwich Hill 0 Macarthur Rams 0, Northern Tigers 2 (A Foti 27/46m) Fairfield Bulls 0, Sydney University 2 (P Satos 6/21m) Sutherland Shire Sharks 1 (A Sarmonikas 88m), Ryde City 2 (S Baveas 43m O Skelding 88m) Manly Warringah Dolphins 4 (J Monie 7m J Hutchinson 11m M Williams 26m R Portelli 41m), Hurstville ZSC 3 (J Vrkic 32m E Adam 36m J Vella 56m) Hajduk Wanderers United 2 (S Yildiz 4m R Kuman 87m), Hurstville City Minotaurs 2 (P Vasilareas 1m W Hijazi 22m) Stanmore Hawks 3 (S Dawd 13m penalty J Fotiadis 32m C Gibson 86m), MSC Liverpool 2 (P Polito 40/68m) Fraser Park Dragons 0.

GRADE 20: Dulwich Hill 3 Macarthur Rams 1, Northern Tigers 2 Fairfield Bulls 0, Sydney University 2 Sutherland Shire Sharks 4, Ryde City 0 Manly Warringah Dolphins 4, Hurstville ZSC 2 Hajduk Wanderers United 0, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0 Stanmore Hawks 3, MSC Liverpool 0 Fraser Park Dragons 0.

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Stanmore Hawks	14	9	2	3	28	15	13	29
Manly Warringah	14	9	0	5	20	13	7	27
Hajduk Wanderers	14	8	1	5	18	16	2	25
Fraser Park	14	7	3	4	22	14	8	24
Hurstville ZSC	14	7	3	4	22	17	5	24
Macarthur Rams	14	6	4	4	27	24	3	22
Sydney University	14	6	4	4	16	14	2	22
Fairfield Bulls	14	6	2	6	22	17	5	20
Northern Tigers	14	5	2	7	22	24	-2	17
Hurstville City Min	14	4	4	6	19	22	-3	16
Sutherland Sharks	14	5	1	8	21	28	-7	16
M.S.C. Liverpool	14	4	2	8	17	20	-3	14
Dulwich Hill	14	4	1	9	17	29	-12	13
Ryde City	14	2	3	9	11	29	-18	9

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE GRADE 20

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Manly Warringah	14	13	1	0	50	12	38	40
Fraser Park	14	8	4	2	32	17	15	28
Hajduk Wanderers	14	8	2	4	27	19	8	26
Northern Tigers	14	7	4	3	25	16	9	25
Sutherland Sharks	14	8	1	5	24	16	8	25
Dulwich Hill	14	7	3	4	33	17	16	24
Fairfield Bulls	14	7	3	4	29	24	5	24
M.S.C. Liverpool	14	4	4	6	22	26	-4	16
Macarthur Rams	14	5	1	8	21	26	-5	16
Hurstville City Min	14	4	1	9	11	35	-24	13
Stanmore Hawks	14	4	0	10	13	31	-18	12
Sydney University	14	3	2	9	17	28	-11	11
Hurstville ZSC	14	3	2	9	19	32	-13	11
Ryde City	14	2	2	10	11	35	-24	8

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE - ROUND 15:

FIRST GRADE: Bathurst 75 0 Fairfield City Lions 3 (U Ogmen 10/24m P Markovic 22m), Western Rage 2 (G Wakim I Arrarte) Wollongong United 0, Hills United 7 (J Miller x 3 D Provan x1 M Gabriel x 1 M Pearson x1 M McCrory x 1) Mt Pritchard 1, Schofields Scorpions 1 (A Picken 43m) Nepean Association 1 (S Mort 17m), Belmore Hercules 2 (J Tsironis 39/55m) White City 0, Camden Tigers 0 Liverpool Bossy 1 (N Bosevski 68m), Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0 The Wanderers 2 (J Hurtado Pachec 37m J Arango 50m).

GRADE 20: Bathurst 75 0 Fairfield City Lions 0, Western Rage 3 Wollongong United 1, Hills United 5 Mt Pritchard 2, Schofields Scorpions 2 Nepean Association 1, Belmore Hercules 0 White City 2, Camden Tigers 3 Liverpool Bossy 0, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 4 The Wanderers 1.

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Wollongong United	15	10	1	4	34	14	20	31
Nepean Association	15	9	4	2	34	17	17	31
Fairfield City Lions	15	9	4	2	36	24	12	31
Liverpool Bossy	15	9	3	3	32	21	11	30
Western Rage	15	8	3	4	40	27	13	27
Hills Utd Brumbies	15	8	3	4	33	22	11	27
Mt Pritchard	15	7	1	7	25	22	3	22
White City	15	7	1	7	25	22	-3	22
Belmore Hercules	15	4	4	7	15	24	-9	16
The Wanderers	15	4	3	8	24	34	-10	15
Bathurst '75	15	3	5	7	18	28	-10	14
S'fields Scorpions	15	2	5	8	21	37	-16	11
Camden Tigers	15	2	5	8	13	31	-18	11
Mt Druitt Town Ran	15	0	4	11	13	40	-27	4

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE GRADE 20

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Nepean Association	15	12	1	2	34	15	19	37
Mt Pritchard	15	11	1	3	47	20	27	34
Western Rage	15	10	3	2	53	19	34	33
Mt Druitt Town Ran	15	9	2	4	38	16	22	29
S'fields Scorpions	15	9	2	4	29	19	10	29
Hills Utd Brumbies	15	8	2	5	37	18	19	26
White City	15	7	3	5	37	38	-1	24
Camden Tigers	15	7	2	6	26	25	1	23
The Wanderers	15	5	1	9	35	38	-3	16
Belmore Hercules	15	4	2	9	21	33	-12	14
Bathurst '75	15	4	1	10	15	41	-26	13
Fairfield City Lions	15	2	5	8	20	33	-13	11
Liverpool Bossy	15	2	2	11	19	46	-27	8
Wollongong United	15	1	1	13	19	69	-50	4

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO - ROUND 11:

FIRST GRADE: Blacktown Districts 3 (S Falanga 25m G Vavdinos 73m L Granata 84m) Hawkesbury City 0, Auburn Stars 0 Hakoah 1 (T Sperber 59m), Greystanes SC 1 (A Eid 57m) Springwood SC 0, Southern Star Sharks 4 (J McLeay 37/87m P Glekas 71m J Walsh 88m) Prospect United 1 (R Dunn 63m), Greenisland SC 0 UNSW 2 (S Munro 38m).

GRADE 21: Blacktown Districts 2 Hawkesbury City 1, Auburn Stars 2 Hakoah 7, Greystanes SC 0 Springwood SC 0, Southern Star Sharks 1 Prospect United 1, Greenisland SC 0 UNSW 4.

GRADE 19: Blacktown Districts 2 Hawkesbury City 1, Auburn Stars 0 Hakoah 8, Greystanes SC 1 Springwood SC 1, Southern Star Sharks 3 Prospect United 3, Greenisland SC 1 UNSW 2.

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Blacktown Districts	10	6	1	3	19	17	2	19
Auburn Stars	10	5	2	3	17	10	7	17
Springwood	10	5	2	3	12	8	4	17
Inter Lions	9	5	1	3	22	11	11	16
Hakoah	10	5	1	4	18	17	1	16
Southern Star	10	4	3	3	14	12	2	15
Greystanes	10	4	2	4	12	13	-1	14
Hawkesbury City	10	2	6	2	14	16	-2	12
Prospect United	10	2	3	5	12	21	-9	9
Greenisland SC	9	1	4	4	12	17	-5	7
UNSW	10	2	1	7	9	19	-10	7

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Blacktown Districts	10	6	2	2	22	14	8	20
Inter Lions	9	6	1	2	34	11	23	19
UNSW	10	5	3	2	41	11	30	18
Springwood	10	5	3	2	30	9	21	18
Hakoah	10	4	4	2	20	12	8	16
Hawkesbury City	10	3	5	2	22	11	11	14
Greystanes	10	3	5	2	14	14	0	14
Southern Star	10	2	4	4	18	26	-8	10
Greenisland SC	9	3	0	6	17	23	-6	9
Prospect United	10	2	3	5	16	28	-12	9
Auburn Stars	10	0	0	10	10	85	-75	0

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO GRADE 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
UNSW	10	8	0	2	30	7	23	24
Hakoah	10	7	1	2	31	14	17	22
Inter Lions	10	7	0	3	36	11	27	21
Greenisland SC	10	7	0	3	27	15	12	21
Hawkesbury City	10	5	1	4	21	19	2	16
Prospect United	10	4	2	4	23	22	1	14
Blacktown Districts	10	4	1	5	16	19	-3	13
Springwood	10	3	2	5	12	20	-8	11
Southern Star	10	2	3	5	15	22	-7	9
Greystanes	10	1	3	6	14	23	-9	6
Auburn Stars	10	0	1	9	7	62	-55	1

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION THREE - ROUND 11:

FIRST GRADE: Balmain SC 6 Lithgow Workmen 2, Earlwood Wanderers 0 Sydney Cedars SC 3, Kellyville Kolts 4 Gladesville United 2, Trasandinos 4 Roosters FC 1, Gazy Lansvale East Coast Magic Postponed, Colo Colo 1 New Sporting SCC 1.

RESERVE GRADE: Balmain SC 4 Lithgow Workmen 1, Earlwood Wanderers 0 Sydney Cedars SC 0, Kellyville Kolts 1 Gladesville United 3Trasandinos 1 Roosters FC 3, Gazy Lansvale East Coast Magic Postponed, Colo Colo 5 New Sporting SCC 0.

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION THREE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Balmain SC	11	9	0	2	40	16	24	27
East Coast Magic	10	8	1	1	31	16	15	25
Kellyville Kolts	11	8	0	3	28	19	9	24
Trasandinos	11	7	2	2	27	15	12	23
Sydney Cedars SC	11	6	0	5	34	21	13	18
Colo Colo	10	5	1	4	21	20	1	16
Gladesville United	11	3	4	4	21	21	0	13
Gazy Lansvale	9	3	1	5	14	14	0	10
Lithgow Workmen	11	2	2	7	13	34	-21	8
Earlwood Wand	11	2	1	8	10	30	-20	7
Roosters FC	11	1	3	7	20	33	-13	6
Sporting SCC	11	1	3	7	9	29	-20	6

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION THREE RESERVE GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Balmain SC	11	9	2	0	57	11	46	29
Trasandinos	11	6	3	2	29	18	11	21
Kellyville Kolts	11	6	3	2	24	16	8	21
Gladesville United	11	4	6	1	28	15	13	18
Earlwood Wand	11	5	2	4	26	14	12	17
Colo Colo	10	4	4	2	24	16	8	16
Sydney Cedars SC	11	4	3	4	21	14	7	15
East Coast Magic	10	3	4	3	16	11	5	13
Roosters FC	11	4	1	6	21	22	-1	13
Sporting SCC	11	2	1	8	8	51	-43	7
Gazy Lansvale	9	1	1	7	12	46	-36	4
Lithgow Workmen	11	0	2	9	8	38	-30	2

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Stallions ride Koalas to top spot

By Aimee Brown

Marconi had a crucial win after a top of the table clash this weekend against North West Sydney Koalas at Morrison Bay Park.

This win secured their position on the highest rung of the ladder, whereas a loss would have meant surrendering this lead to the Koalas, who have dominated the competition up until the halfway mark of the season.

The close 1-0 scoreline reflected the hard work put in by both sides, who fought relentlessly in the midfield throughout the majority of the game.

Marconi had the early lead and dominated ball possession in the first half, but strong defence work by the Koalas, as well as some spectacular saves by Cassie Kell kept them from scoring despite numerous opportunities.

Marconi played a tight game, passing well and using the flanks as well as the midfield to push the ball down into the Koalas' end. Kristy Rohrer, Alicia Cavanagh and Neisha Klessattel, had particularly good games, and worked hard to fight through the Koalas' defence.

Their hard work paid off in the 23rd minute with a goal scored against the odds.

Rohrer took a long shot from 35 metres out which hit the crossbar and bounced in front of Kell, who cleared out, Alicia Cavanagh rebounded, and shot again towards goal, only to be thwarted by a brilliant diving save by Kell.

But unfortunately for the Koalas, Fab Perfilio was perfectly positioned to pick up the second rebound and tapped it into the right hand side of the goal.

Marconi continued to dominate the remainder of the first half, and although some chances were created by the Koalas, the omnipresent Marconi defence rarely let them get any further than the 18-yard box.

After half time the Koalas came back with renewed vigour, and balanced out the ball possession, pushing more frequently down into Marconi's end.

Koalas' Wendy Graham had very strong second half on the left side, challenging well for the ball and repeatedly ducking it past Marconi.

Graham was assisted by Heidi Lavis, who played an excellent game, also doing a good job of bringing the ball down into the 18-yard box.

It was clear that both teams really wanted this win. As the game progressed play got more physical and there were a few injuries that held up play in the second half.

There was only one serious injury, however, when Marconi's Joanne Greco tried to take on the Koalas' keeper Cassie Kell and ended up being stretchered off the field with suspected concussion.

In the final 20 minutes of play the Koalas really fought had to find the equalising goal, but Marconi's defence were determined not to let them through.

The Koalas' coach, Michael Beckett, was not too perturbed by the loss. He felt that his team played a very strong game and was happy with their performance.

"They were very determined and they were giving things a go, so I'm pleased," he said, "it's the second half of the season now, so it's to be expected that things are going to get much harder."

Marconi's coach, Eric Van Arkel, took a pragmatic approach to the win, saying, "we've still got a long way to go".

At Lynwood Park the Macarthur Rams had an important 2-0 win over Sutherland, which kept them in the top half of the competition.

It was a hard fought game, and although Sutherland worked hard, Macarthur had the edge. The Rams scored their first goal in the 21st minute courtesy of Shannon Dunn who tapped it in off the rebound of an attempted shot from the left.

In the second half Sutherland had some good build ups, but couldn't manage to penetrate the Rams' defence. Michelle Carney scored Macarthur's second goal in the last ten minutes of the game, kicking it in after a corner.

UNSW drew against the travelling Wollongong Wolves at David Phillips Field. Uni dominated in the first half, after scoring in the fourth minute.

The opening goal came from a Wollongong defence blunder which allowed Uni striker Alex Smith to slot one away, putting the pressure on Wollongong. The students continued to apply the pressure and created many opportunities in the opening period and were unlucky not to extend their lead going into the break.

In the second half Wollongong came back stronger and took over the majority of the ball possession. In the 55th minute, Wollongong's Vanessa Mann saw an opportunity and ran the ball from the middle of the park and shot low and hard from outside the 18-yard box into the bottom right corner of the UNSW goal, levelling the score.

It was a physical match, and four yellow cards were issued to Wollongong, but the score was reflective of a tight well-fought game.

Nepean Association travelled out to Proctor Park and were narrowly beaten 2-1 by the Bathurst City Panthers.

Nepean dominated the first half, but no goals were scored until just before half time when Nepean's Melissa Fuller headed in from a corner.

Nepean took their lead into the second half, but Bathurst found their feet and came from behind to win the game.

They scored early in the second half with a well-worked team goal that was put away by Lauren Armstrong in the 48th minute.

This was followed up with another goal four minutes later by Gillian Rosconi, who manoeuvred past three defence players and the keeper to slot the ball into the right side of the goal.

NSW Academy had a huge win this weekend, taking home a 7-0 victory against the Manly-Warringah Dolphins at Cromer Park.

Academy were in spectacular form and although Manly also played well, but they were no match for the Academy on the day.

Servet Uzunlar scored a hat-trick for Academy. Her most impressive goal was her second, which was shot with unbelievable force from a corner into the far top corner of the goal. Academy's Sally Shipard also had a brilliant game, causing trouble for the Manly side and chimed in with a goal of her own.

Despite this onslaught, the Dolphins also had a very strong first half, and Emma Howes had a very close shot at goal which just skimmed over the crossbar.

Although they celebrated a huge win, Academy also suffered one potentially serious injury with Briony Holcombe being taken off with a suspected fractured collarbone after colliding badly with a Manly players in a header challenge.

She will be out of action for four to six weeks.

Arrive alive NSW WOMENS SUPER LEAGUE

ARRIVE ALIVE NSW WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Marconi Stallions	11	10	0	1	39	8	31	30
NSW Academy	10	8	1	1	36	6	30	25
NW Sydney Koalas	11	8	1	2	25	16	9	25
Macarthur Rams	11	5	2	4	26	24	2	17
Wollongong Wolves	11	4	3	4	14	13	1	15
Sutherland Assoc	11	3	3	5	10	19	-9	12
Bathurst City Pan	11	3	1	7	11	20	-9	10
UNSW	11	2	3	6	9	24	-15	9
Manly Warringah	10	3	0	7	12	30	-18	9
Nepean Association	11	0	2	9	2	24	-22	2

ARRIVE ALIVE NSW WOMENS SUPER LEAGUE: ROUND 11:

FIRST GRADE: Macarthur Rams 2 (S Dunn 21m M Carney 80m) Sutherland Association 0, Marconi 1 (F Perfilio 23m) North West Sydney Koalas 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 0 NSW Academy 7 (Y Uzunlar 8/20/25m L Blayney 49m D Brogan 56m A Adalis 78m S Shipard 82m), UNSW 1 (A Smith 4m) Wollongong Wolves 1 (V Mann 55m), Bathurst City Panthers 2 (L Armstrong 48m G Rosconi 52m) Nepean Association 1 (M Fuller 43m).

GRADE 21: Macarthur Rams 0 Sutherland Association 10, Marconi 2 North West Sydney Koalas 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 0 NSW Academy 1, UNSW 0 Wollongong Wolves 3, Bathurst City Panthers Nepean Association Postponed.

ARRIVE ALIVE NSW WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Marconi Stallions	11	9	1	1	36	9	27	28
NSW Academy	10	9	0	1	44	6	38	27
Sutherland Assoc	11	8	0	3	31	11	20	24
NW Sydney Koalas	11	6	1	4	18	17	1	19
Manly Warringah	10	6	0	4	25	8	17	18
Wollongong Wolves	11	5	2	4	12	16	-4	17
Nepean Association	10	4	0	6	17	38	-21	12
UNSW	11	2	0	9	7	37	-30	6
Bathurst City Pan	10	1	2	7	3	27	-24	5
Macarthur Rams	11	0	0	11	5	29	-24	0

Saints decimate lowly Raptors

By Aimee Brown

St George Association had a big 4-0 win over the Roselands Raptors at St George Stadium this weekend in round 11 of the Arrive alive NSW Womens State League.

Both sides battled well but St George had the edge and took home the victory.

The first goal was scored by Hayley Billet in the 16th minute, whose shot from the edge of the 18-yard box confounded the Roselands keeper.

Billet scored her second in the 23rd minute after a well-worked team goal, which took them into the second half with a 2-0 lead.

The Raptors continued to fight despite a number of injuries and a number of players having to play two games back-to-back and managed to create a few chances, but unfortunately couldn't convert them into goals.

Fiona Forster scored St George's third goal in the 52nd minute from a penalty, and Courtney Snedden scored the Saints final goal in the 71st minute.

The Gladesville Ravens had a very important win this weekend over Southern Branch, which brings them closer to the top half of the competition table. Southern Branch had the early lead after Katie French scored in the 15th minute, giving them the advantage for most of the first half.

However, just before half time Margaret Corderoy scored for Gladesville after a scrambling goal. This levelled the score going into the second half and put the pressure on both sides.

It was a fast game, played end-to-end, with a lot of action taking place in the midfield.

Gladesville came together in the second half and managed to break the draw in the 68th minute, when Charlotte Frew scored with a lofted drive, which just cleared the underneath of the crossbar.

Gladesville secured the result in the last five minutes of the game with a goal courtesy of Natasha Bohm.

Granville Rage had a close 1-0 win over Hawkesbury City at Garside Park. The game was played heavily in the midfield and neither keeper had to work hard. The play was fairly balanced throughout and both teams fought well for the ball, playing some excellent football.

Granville managed to break away in the 28th minute with Georgena Atallah negotiating past the last line of Hawkesbury defence to put away the only goal of the game. Hawkesbury also had a similar opportunity when striker Elyse Clark broke through the Granville defence, but her attempt was thwarted by the Granville keeper. Athough the teams were well matched, Granville walked away with the win.

Sydney Uni had a 2-0 win this weekend against Blacktown Districts, which restored them to the top the ladder.

Despite the final scoreline, Blacktown played a very strong game and showed a lot of promise, and the result was that a very high standard of football was played on the day.

Blacktown were happy to have Linda Kondek back in the game after a serious hamstring injury took her out of play in round four of the competition.

It was a hard fought game and by half time the score was still nil-all. Uni pressed down on Blacktown from the back, but Blacktown managed to hold Uni off until the 68th minute, when Astrid Loch-Wilkinson beat an offside trap to slot the ball nicely just inside the far post.

The second goal was scored in the last minutes of the game, when Lyndel Hudson pushed the ball off the line and past the keeper to touch it into goal, securing the University win.

Arrive alive NSW WOMENS STATE LEAGUE

ARRIVE ALIVE NSW WOMEN'S STATE LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Sydney University	10	8	1	1	37	7	30	25
Central Coast Utd	9	8	0	1	24	13	11	24
St George Assoc	10	7	1	2	32	15	17	22
Southern Branch	10	6	1	3	39	14	25	19
Gladesville Ravens	10	5	0	5	21	19	2	15
Granville Rage	9	3	0	6	14	25	-11	9
Blacktown Districts	10	3	0	7	14	25	-11	9
Hawkesbury City	10	1	1	8	6	31	-25	4
Roselands Raptors	10	1	0	9	5	43	-38	3

ARRIVE ALIVE NSW WOMENS STATE LEAGUE: ROUND 11:

FIRST GRADE: Blacktown Districts 0 Sydney University 2 (A Loch - Wilkinson 68m L Hudson 84m), St George Association 4 (H Billett 16/23m F Forster 52m C Snedden 71m) Roselands Raptors 0, Granville Rage 1 (G Atallah 28m) Hawkesbury City 0, Southern Branch 1 (K French 15m) Gladesville Ravens 3 (M Corderoy 41m C Frew 68m N Bohm 85m).

GRADE 21: Blacktown Districts 0 Sydney University 0, St George Association 1 Roselands Raptors 2, Granville Rage 3 Hawkesbury City 3, Southern Branch 2 Gladesville Ravens 5.

ARRIVE ALIVE NSW WOMEN'S STATE LEAGUE GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pt
Sydney University	10	7	2	1	26	5	21	23
St George Assoc	10	7	1	2	31	9	22	22
Blacktown Districts	10	7	1	2	27	12	15	22
Roselands Raptors	10	6	0	4	41	13	28	18
Central Coast Utd	9	4	2	3	17	16	1	14
Gladesville Ravens	10	4	0	6	22	31	-9	12
Hawkesbury City	10	2	1	7	7	37	-30	7
Southern Branch	10	2	0	8	18	40	-22	6
Granville Rage	9	1	1	7	17	43	-26	4

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Hurstville win vital victory over Hajduk

By Greg Stock

A resilient Hurstville ZSC stamped themselves as genuine top five contenders disposing of a lacklustre Hajduk Wanderers United at Hurstville Oval on Sunday.

Despite falling behind to a fourth minute header from Hajduk defender Sefer Yildiz, Hurstville staged a dramatic comeback to lead 3-1 midway through the second half, and then held on by the skin of their teeth inside a dramatic last ten minutes to record the win.

Without the services of the injured Richard Plesa, sidelined with a head gash, ZSC coach John Gagro switched Joe Vrkic back to sweeper and gave the midfield duties to the recently married Michael Cunico.

The move paid dividends with Vrkic far more comfortable in his role at the back shoring up the defence and allowing Cunico to mastermind the win.

"Our defence today was absolutely brilliant and they really deserve a huge wrap," Gagro said, "Joe (Vrkic) held us together well and with Joe Moric coming into the team for Steve Moskum the back four really worked well and were the cornerstone of the victory."

Some poor marking in the fourth minute allowed Hajduk defender Sefer Yildiz to ghost in at the back post and put away a Chris Camilleri corner, but after surviving a torrid first ten minutes, Hurstville hit their straps thanks largely to the inspirational efforts of Cunico and Jason Vella.

A former Hajduk midfielder himself, Vella ripped the Wanderers open down the left-hand side to set up the first two goals and score a third himself.

He provided two telling crosses in the 32nd and 36th minutes which set up goals for Vrkic and lightweight striker Eddie Adam, both of whom catching Hajduk goalkeeper Daniel Schwarzer in no-mans land.

Vella then landed a brilliant individual strike in the 53rd minute when he raced forward on the counterattack and found the net at the back post from the tightest of angles.

By contrast Hajduk lacked the penetration they have shown in previous weeks and failed to show enough ball control in the centre of the park to mount any sustained pressure.

Too many cheap turnovers proved costly and it wasn't until a brilliant individual strike from Robert Kuman inside the last five minutes that they really clicked into gear.

Hurstville survived a desperate last ten minutes which saw a couple of spirited physical incidents involving goalkeeper Robert Mustapic, with the tall number one venting his anger with Brendan Salameh in a fiery exchange as Hajduk searched in vain for a late equaliser.

"I am very happy with the way we played today aside from the first ten minutes of the first half and the last ten minutes of the second half," Gagro said, "this game was the first time all season we have conceded the first goal and come back to the win a match and that for us is a very positive thing."

Gagro announced post match that Joe Vrkic and Stephen Moskum will be leaving the club in the next two weeks, Vrkic for his wedding and honeymoon and Moskum for a holiday.

"We had Richard Plesa out tonight and Joe Moric came in off the bench so we have two capable replacements, plus we are talking with Mirko Jurilj so we should have enough to cover the holes," he said.

HURSTVILLE ZSC 3
(J Vrkic 32', E Adam 36', J Vella 56')

HAJDUK WANDERERS 2
(S Yildiz 4', R Kuman 87')

HURSTVILLE ZSC: Robert Mustapic, Joe Vrkic, Stipe Milicevic, Joe Vrkic, Stephan Moskum (Joe Moric 30'), Jason Vella (Ante Majetic 85'), Anthony Jusic, Michael Cunico, Ante Allovic, Eddie Adam, Denis Allovic (Robert Babaic 70'); **Coach:** John Gagro.

HAJDUK WANDERERS UNITED: Daniel Schwarzer, Robert Kuman, Michael McGovern, Sefer Yildiz, Mark Abi-Arrage, Erkin Barkhousir (George Issa 70'), George Quattrone (Tuan Cao 79'), Navid Varess, Brendan Salameh, Anthony Mrdjen, Chris Camilleri;
Coach: Bruce Tilt.

Referee: Con Diomis
Assistant Referees: Jim Nicolaou & Gemal Soliman
Fourth Official: Wilf Filipczyk
Yellow Cards: Cunico (HZSC) 16', Vella (HZSC) 53', Mustapic (HZSC) 89'

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY 2 – SUTHERLAND 1

Sydney University moved to within a win of a coveted top-five position disposing of a disappointing Sutherland side 2-0 at University Oval.

The star of the show was midfielder Peter Satos who scored two brilliant individual goals inside the first 25 minutes and probably should have had a hat-trick when he missed a simple one on one chance midway through the second half.

Working in combination with Josh Sama and Rob Smithies, Satos scored number one in the 6th minute when he beat the offside trap to collect a Smithies through ball and just got the barest of touches in front of an advancing Adam Kurtz.

Fifteen minutes later he had two when he used Sama as a decoy and dummied a pass, busting open the Sharks defence. Swinging onto his right foot he pigeon holed a shot into the top right corner from the edge of the area.

Sutherland managed to get one back inside the last minute when Stewart Van Bentum knocked in an excellent cross for Anthony Sarmonikas to put away, but sadly for the Sharks it was too little too late as they slumped to 11th on the competition table.

RYDE CITY 2 – MANLY-WARRINGAH 4

A brilliant first half from Manly was more than enough to put away bottom side Ryde City at Magdala Park.

While Dolphins coach Manly described the sides first half as "terrific" he also noted the second half as "woeful" as his side went through the motions, almost allowing the Gunners to sneak back into the contest.

In the 7th minute Bradley Groves struck a stinging 30-metre shot from the right which Ryde goalkeeper Tony Petrovski could only parry and speedster James Monie, who had made a run, met the ball and pushed it into the net.

Four minutes later, with Ryde's defence struggling to adjust to the pace of their northern neighbours, the Gunners conceded a second when John Hutchinson hit a shot from 25-metres out that beat an acrobatic attempted save from Petrovski.

In the 26th minute Mick Williams evaded his defender and scored from the edge of the area before former Gunner Rob Portelli slipped in to beat the keeper to a loose ball in the 41st minute, the scoreboard reading 4-0.

Ryde got one back in the 43rd minute when Alex Wilkinson made a surging run down the left and hit a 30-metre lightning bolt which cannoned off the far right upright, and rocketed out to Steve Baveas following through, who knocked it in.

The first half had been a few chances, all taken, but the second half was even more action, with the Dolphins perhaps easing and the Ryde team, getting their 'shape' back, put sustained pressure on with Jamie Jackson chancing a strike and Oliver Skelding hitting the side netting in the first few minutes.

At the other end Monie, Steve Berry, and Williams all had chances, with the last saved one handed by a diving Petrovski. A long early cross from the right by Daniel Nero found an overlapping Glen Willis in the 65th minute but the header went just wide on the left.

Action continued end to end, but Ryde took back some more pride when in the 88th minute Simon Turner robbed Pascal Julliard near the centre line on the left, and ran toward goal, slipping the ball to Oliver Skelding who drew out the goalkeeper Dean McCreath and slotted it in.

The win consolidated Manly's spot in the top three while the Gunners continue to remain bolted to the bottom.

MSC LIVERPOOL 2 – FRASER PARK 0

MSC Liverpool pulled off the upset of the round defeating premiership aspirants 2-0 at Hammondville Oval.

Two goals to former Marconi youth star Pat Polito was the highlight as MSC carried out coach Paul Carter's gameplan to the letter.Getting men behind the ball and defending their back third stoutly, the Dragons lacked any real penetration and continued to show signs of growing frustration the longer the game went.

Polito scored the first of his two goals in the 40th minute when he beat the offside trap and found the top left corner with a shot from just outside the area.

The second in the 68th minute was a real class effort, as Paul Bourke won the ball in midfield and released the talented striker with a defence splitting through ball that allowed Polito to successfully go one on one with goalkeeper Jason Holmes.

Fraser did have a chance inside the last ten minutes to peg one back when midfielder Ante Juric was bought down inside the penalty box. But striker Tanju Balabanel had his shot easily saved by Steve Minovski and MSC were home for just the fourth time this season.

"There were eleven heroes out there today," Carter said, "it is definitely the best win we have had since I took over as coach. A remarkable effort."

STANMORE HAWKS 3 – HURSTVILLE CITY MINOTAURS 2

Stanmore Hawks looked anything but the league leaders during a feisty first half with the Minotaurs at Rockdale.

Inside the first sixty seconds they fell behind to a Peiros Vasilereas goal when he turned in a corner from the first attacking play of the game.

Sam Dawd levelled the scores twelve minutes later when he converted a penalty after he was dragged down inside the box by Sam Panagakis.

Former Hawks man Wasim Hijazi put the Minotaurs back in front when he capitalised on some poor ball control by the Hawks back four, before John Fotiadis ran onto a through ball and netted on the run in the 32nd minute to leave the scores level at half-time.

After a half time tirade from coach Sotiri Mavros, the Hawks looked much more fluid in the second half and with new signing Chad Gibson finding his feet the result only seemed a matter of time.

To the Minotaurs credit it did take longer than anticipated, with Dawd setting up Gibson inside the last five minutes and in brilliant fashion he hit a bicycle kick from about ten-yards to beat the diving goalkeeper.

The celebration by Gibson in front of the Hawks dugout was almost as spectacular as the goal itself, with the result seeing the Hawks move back to the top of the table following Hajduk's 3-2 loss to Hurstville.

DULWICH HILL 0 – MACARTHUR RAMS 0

Dulwich Hill coach Jimmy Patikas can't seem to catch a break at present, watching desperately as his side blew any number of chances to post a draw with Macarthur at Arlington Oval.

With star striker Steve Karavatakis benched with a calf injury, and Tallan Martin playing with a sore knee, the Hill's lack of punch on the forward line ultimately cost them in a game which did not reach any dizzying heights.

John Chavez, deputising for Karavatakis, blew a number of costly one on ones, including a shot in the 60th minute that slammed into the upright and trickled out harmlessly over the by line.

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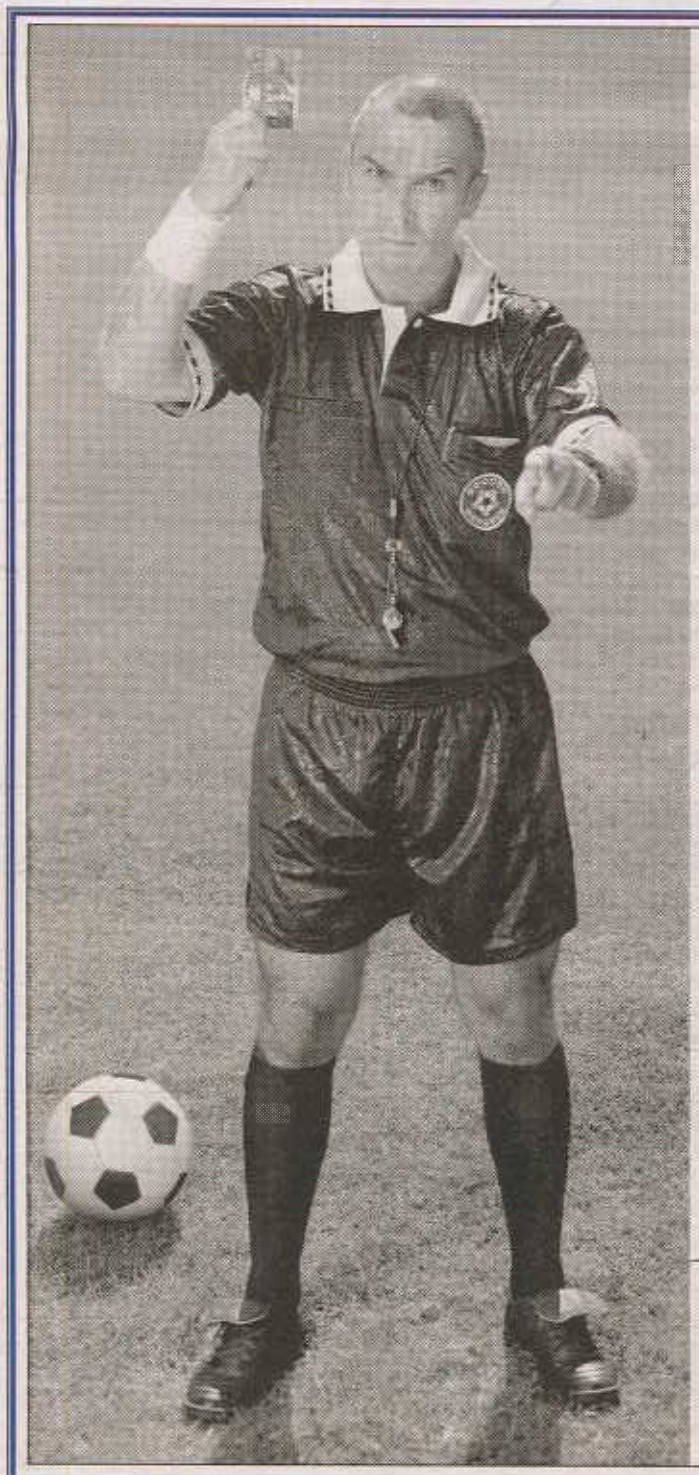
Will Greece upset the hosts?



You'll see red if you miss Euro 2004.

Euro 2004 kicks off this weekend so if you don't get your bets on in time you'll have to wait another our years. SportsTAB is o ering a number of betting options on the tournament as well as plenty of betting options on all games. Just make sure you get your bets on because the penalty or missing out could be very costly.

RESULT (2AM 13/6)	
Portugal	$1.38
Draw	$4.00
Greece	$8.00

RESULT (2AM 14/6)	
Switzerland	$3.00
Draw	$3.20
Croatia	$2.20

RESULT (2AM 15/6)	
Denmark	$4.35
Draw	$3.35
Italy	$1.75

RESULT (4:45AM 13/6)	
Spain	$1.50
Draw	$3.60
Russia	$6.50

RESULT (2AM 14/6)	
France	$1.80
Draw	$3.40
England	$4.00

RESULT (4.45AM 15/6)	
Sweden	$1.85
Draw	$3.30
Bulgaria	$3.90

TOURNAMENT WINNER	
France	$3.60
Italy	$6.50
Portugal	$6.50
Spain	$7.00
Holland	$7.00
Czech Republic	$10.00
England	$11.00
Germany	$21.00
Sweden	$26.00
Croatia	$41.00
Denmark	$41.00
Russia	$101.00
Switzerland	$126.00
Greece	$151.00
Bulgaria	$151.00
Latvia	$501.00

TOURNAMENT TOP GOAL SCORER*	
Thierry Henry (France)	$7.00
Ruud Van Nistelrooy (Holland)	$8.50
Christian Vieri (Italy)	$8.50
David Trezeguet (France)	$11.00
Michael Owen (England)	$13.00
Raul Gonzalez (Spain)	$13.00
Pauleta (Portugal)	$15.00
Patrick Kluivert (Holland)	$21.00
Fernando Morientes (Spain)	$21.00
Players Not Quoted	$21.00
Deco (Portugal)	$26.00
Kevin Kuranyi (Germany)	$31.00
Francesco Totti (Italy)	$31.00
Fernando Torres (Spain)	$31.00
Roy Makaay (Holland)	$34.00
Henrik Larsson (Sweden)	$34.00

*others quoted

Betting available online at sportstab.com.au up until the start of the 2nd game each night at 4:45am

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